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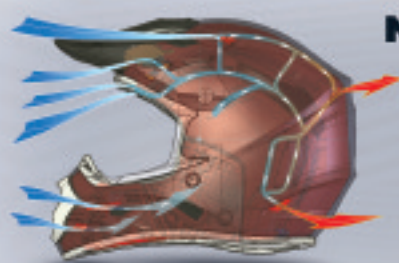
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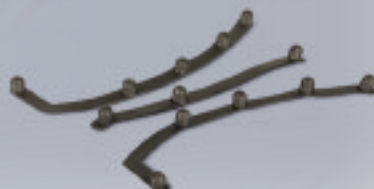
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CONTENTS: Edmund B Radley throws out a fat whip while testing Steven Clarke's Maxxis Apico Suzuki © Sully

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COMMENT

If you'd told me 10 years ago I'd start this column by admitting that I miss Billy MacKenzie I'd have laughed in your face. Back then there were two distinct camps in UK motocross – Swordy or Billy – and I was always a Swordy fan. I still am a Swordy fan – to me he's the Hong Kong Phooey of the motocross world. Off the bike he's a mild-mannered janitor but once his race face is on he's super-determined with a ferocious will to win. He's also as tough as they come as evidenced at Desertmartin where, unable to get the squeamish medics to even attempt to put his dislocated shoulder back in, he tried to do it himself.

Billiam is an entirely different animal. Sure, he's a hard wee bastid and no mistake but he also brings to the races a buzz that no-one else can. Now back in the day when MacKenzie and Swordy had this whole thing going on I always found Billy arrogant and far too outspoken on subjects I reckoned he knew nothing about. Of course, his wreckers or chequers approach to racing was always wildly entertaining but he wasn't someone I'd have a craic with in the pits.

But times change and since he's been writing a column for us – and it's been over five years now – I've got a much better idea of what makes him tick. Billy is incapable of playing things safe and it's that refusal to take the easy option which still polarizes opinion on him. Remember the 2008 des Nations at Donington? In the dying stages of the last moto we had a podium finish in the bag before Billy crashed because he couldn't stop pushing. He got the slagging of the century after that which was completely, utterly unfair. He was picked for the team for precisely the same reason he crashed – because he doesn't give up. You can't select a rider for being who is and then slag him off for doing what he does.

Billy did one more injury-hit year in Europe, came in for a shedload more flak and then, sick of all the slagging, when offered the chance to race in Australia he took it. He's been there ever since and he ain't coming back for 2012 which may be good for him but it's bad for the British scene. Anyone who went to Matterley in August should know what I mean. How much of a buzz was there when Billy was racing? How much excitement did he inject into the MX1 races? Isn't it typical that after Brad Anderson claimed a career-best fifth overall most talk was about whether the scene-stealing Billy was still alive after crashing out of race two? So while I'm glad he's enjoying his life Down Under I'm gutted we won't see him racing in Britain next year.

It's even more gutting because with the return of Shaun Simpson in 2012 racing a 450F with a Rinaldi-prepped factory engine, Brad with a stellar season under his belt determined to retain his title, a fully-fit Swordy on a Suzuki by Tas and the likes of Kristian Whatley and Martin Barr in the mix, Billy coming back would be the nuts.

It won't just be Billy who's going to be missed next year as Jake Nicholls is also saying goodbye to the UK for 2012. After three years with Roger Magee's outfit The Reverend has signed with Jacky Martens' Nestaan KTM team to race MX2 GPs as well as the Dutch championship plus a handful of Belgian championship rounds. It's a good career move for Jake, one he thoroughly deserves and I wish him well.

Before I sign off there's going to be one more notable absentee from national competition. Over in the world of enduro Paul Edmondson has decided that this has been his last full season of BEC action. 'Legend' is a description incorrectly applied to so many its meaning has become diluted but in the off-road world that's exactly what Fast Eddy is with his four world titles, multiple British crowns and 17 ISDE gold medals.

Jonny pays tribute to Paul on page 31 of this month's mag and something he says, about the way just Paul's presence has raised the BEC's profile and added to its credibility, takes me full circle to the point I was trying to make about Billy Mac.

See you at the Dirt Bike Show...

Sean



© Nuno Laranjeira

Dungey – seriously Fuxed up!

NEWSH^{PAW}UND!

A LEG-HUMPINGLY FINE DIRTY DELIVERY OF PIPING HOT DIRT BIKING NEWS...

So what about the MXdN? I couldn't be in France to enjoy it live this year so I set myself up in front of the telly with a box of tissues – I had a snotty nose, sicko – on Sunday afternoon to catch all the action in my own living room. Whether you were there dodging showers and onion sellers in France or, like me, witnessed the whole thing from home I can more or less guarantee that your afternoon was like 'yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, noooooooo' as the Brits led after race one, the Frenchies after moto two and then the Yanks turned it all around in the third decisive race to win as per usual. Merde tete!

Our boys put on a jolly good show with Tommy riding out of his skin, Ando doing what Ando does and even our Canadian ringer going okay too although he was slowed by an undiagnosed broken scaphoid and a crash or two in moto two. Fourth overall for the Brits and a B-Final win for Team Ireland that translated into a 19th place in the final classification is definitely something to be applauded so well done to the six of ya and everyone else involved.

The Nations is the biggest MX show on earth so it makes sense that if you're going to unveil some radical new riding gear then that's the place to do it. Step forward Ryan Dungey who, thanks to his Leatt, has become the poster boy for the hot new Fux range of clothing. Personally, this Dawg can't wait for some casual Fux to compliment the race kit!

As well as the AMA team's seventh straight victory the big hype Stateside right now is all about the Monster Energy Cup that's set to rock Sam Boyd Stadium in Vegas on October 15. There's a million dollars on the line for any rider who can win all three Main Events in the motocross/supercross hybrid event on a course

designed by Ricky Carmichael and Jeremy McGrath. All the big names bar Ryan Dungey should be there although James Stewart has tweeted that he's struggling to put the finishing touches to his new set-up – thought to be Factory Suzuki – and may miss out. Whatever, it's bound to be a night to remember as Reed, Villopoto, Alessi, Windham, Musquin, Barcia and Hansen battle it out for the big bucks. With that in mind my money's on game hunter RV2 to take the cool mil.

Just before DBR hit the printers it was announced that Ben Townley would also race in Vegas which hopefully means he has his head around the issues that saw him end his GP season with CLS Kawasaki early. Let's hope he'll be back in Europe to challenge Cairoli and Pourcel for the title in 2012!

BT's training buddy Jake Nicholls aka The Reverend aka Captain Cheese Ranger aka the Flying Fanny Bandit bummed me out with the news that he won't be racing in Britain next year as he's only gone and signed for the JM Racing KTM team. Armed with Ken Roczen's year-old factory KTMs for his next-to-last attack on the MX2 world championship, it's a great move for the Suffolk Saxon who needs better equipment like I need a new knee. Or The Bear needs a hot floor to make him dance. But it's not such great news for the Maxxis series that'll be kicking off at FatCat next year without him. Boo hoo!

What is a nice slice of news though is that Woody's back! Yup, after a few years chasing GP glory overseas Shaun Simpson is back where he belongs in 2012 – that's in Britain in case you were wondering. The recently crowned Belgian MX1 champ will be wearing Yamaha colours for the first time in his career as he joins the Bike It Cosworth



Here come the Brits



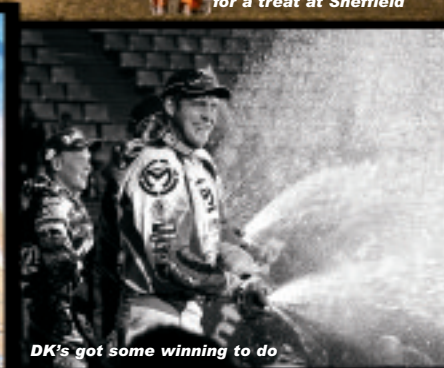
Shaun Simpson – 11 out of 10 for cool



Supercross fans are in for a treat at Sheffield



EBB, his DB Racing Honda team and No Fear's blond bombshell Phil Coulter toast Red Bull Pro Nationals glory



DK's got some winning to do



Monster Yamaha squad as their 450 guy alongside MX2 heroes Zach Osborne and Arnaud Tonus. You may also have noticed that Wild Wolf are out and Monster are in as team sponsors as the American drinks giant gets an even firmer grip on the global motocross market.

DB Racing's Elliott Banks-Browne deserve a hearty slap on the back as he wraps up the Red Bull Pro Nationals MX2 title at the final round of the series in Culham by working through the wrist injury that's haunted him since Duns. Also deserving of a big well done is Brad Anderson as he sealed the MX1 deal at Desertmartin earlier in the month to take the triple crown of domestic MX1 titles – the Maxxis, RBPNs and also the British Masters.

Looking ahead now and October's a great month for off-road sport in the UK with the annual beach race at Weston-super-Mare kicking things off on the weekend of October 8-9 followed by the Weymouth beach blast the weekend after. If you need to know where either of these events is happening the clue is in the name – if you gotta hunch go figure it out Columbo.

After that October 22 sees two very different events both happening in Yorkshire on the same day although the timing of them makes it possible to see both. At 9am on Saturday morning the first of 210 starters will leave the line at the Scott time and observation trial held in the Yorkshire Dales. An epic all-day event, the trial really sorts the men out from the boys and is a great way to spend a Saturday if you do your homework first and figure out the route, where you need to be and when. Check out www.richmondmotorclub.com for all the info you're ever gonna need on that. Best of all it's a free day out so if you're around pop in and see the action – it's rare as owt I tell thee!

When the Scott's done and dusted it'll be time to travel south to Sheffield's Motorpoint Arena for the opening round of the Future West British Supercross Championship where we're expecting to see the greatest line-up of British supercross stars ever assembled – and a Frenchie!

Reigning champs Tommy 'Crunch' Church and Jack Brunell head the entry list and they'll be joined on the night – and for the rest of the series – by Brad Anderson, Stephen Sword, Steven Clarke, Gordy Rockhard, Martin Barr, Breville Nadshaw, Ash Greedy, Nathan 'yesh m'lady' Parker, Elliott Banks-Browne, Matt 'Bigfoot' Bayliss, Lewis Gregory, I'tickler Francois Nico Aubin and a bunch of folk I've either forgotten or not yet been informed about. When you chuck in the youths, amateurs and quads as well you know it's gonna be a night to remember. Tickets are on sale now and you can get yours by calling 0114 256 5656.

For even more details about this fantabulous event and future rounds in Belfast, Glasgow, London and Birmingham log on to www.fwsx.com – and for all you clever folk who pick up DBR as it hits the shelves hurry along to www.dirtbikerider.com for your chance to win a Future West Family Pass that'll get two adults and two nippers into the Sheffield Arena for absolutely nowt. FOC. Gratis. Jack. Not a penny.

Enduro news now and what a great winter of off-road action we have ahead of us. October 29 sees RideoffroadUK's Iron Man Xtreme event go off at Low North Park in Scarborough while the day after Total Enduro's Total Extreme happens at Westwood near Barnsley. Both events have some great riders entered so it's well worth doing the double-header and having a weekend in the White Rose county. For more details log on to

www.rideoffroaduk.co.uk and www.totalenduro.co.uk.

As well as announcing his retirement from top level competition Paul Edmondson's got more big news – the birth of the officially ACU-sanctioned Xtreme Enduro British Championship.

The three-round series kicks off in Buxton on December 4 before resuming after the Christmas and New Year break with a round at Tong Hall on January 8 followed by the grand finale at a top secret location in Wales on January 29. Each of the venues will offer an individual extreme challenge so the series should be a corker!

The line up reads like a who's who of extreme enduro with Knighter, Jonny Walker, Graham Jarvis, Dougie Lampkin, Tom Sagar and Danny McCanney all set to do battle along with a handful of international wildcards – more info on who they are next month.

You might have noticed we've been pushing QR codes a lot in the magazine of late – they're basically those funky little patterned squares you point your smartphone at to be instantly transported to whatever webpage we (or the QR code owner in question) wants you to see whether it be woods ninjas, our competitions page or The Bear in the bath. As well as seeing them in DBR you'll also spot 'em elsewhere – in fact they're popping up all over like those furry little Whack-a-Mole b*stards you see at the fairground!

Probably the coolest QR code placement we've ever seen is on the strap of some Kenny goggles we got sent for Stuff this month. Actually moulded into the rubber we had to test it for ourselves to see if it works – and it does. If you don't believe us point your smartphone at the picture and get transported away on a wonderful journey of discovery on the world wide web...





WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

THOR CASUAL CLOTHING UP FOR GRABS

THOR is the winningest racewear brand in America right now with the company claiming the top step of the podium in four of the five major AMA championship chases thanks to the hard work of Kawasaki stars Broc Tickle, Dean Wilson and Ryan Villopoto.

While THOR's on-track achievements are well documented the brand that was founded by MX legend Torsten Hallman doesn't shout out about the cool-as-coconut-ice casual range as much as it should but we're about to change all that right here, right now.

Fudgeful of tees, hoodies, shorts, hats and possibly even pac-a-macs, the THOR casual range is as broad as it is stunning and thanks to the Milton Keynes' massive aka the rather reem Madison dream team it's all available right here in the UK right now through their extensive dealer network. You can find your local Madison-supplied dealer

by logging on to www.madison.co.uk where you'll also be able to check out a plethora of products from THOR, Asterisk, GoPro, Mechanix and a whole heap of other bargin' brands too.

Anyhoo, to celebrate Scotsman Dean Wilson becoming the first ever Brit to win an AMA National MX title we've hooked up with the dudes at Madison to offer one lucky reader a **THOR casual clothing prize package** that's so spicy it'll make your postie's eyes water as he tries to cram it through your letterbox.

To win the swag which comprises a pair of tees, two hoodies and a couple of hats all you have to do is answer this fiendishly tricky Dean Wilson-related question.

In what year was 19-year-old British MXdN team member Dean Wilson born?

**Is it: A: 1991
B: 1992**

When you've figured out the answer head over to the competitions page at www.dirtbikerider.com or use your smartphone to scan the **QR code** and get taken there like Fred Astaire. Fill in all the appropriate fields, hit transmit and then wait for the news that you're a chicken dinner. If you're not a chicken dinner you can always cheer yourself up by bagging some **THOR casual swag** – it's a win-win situation whatever the outcome.

Entries closes on **November 3** with the first correct answer randomly drawn after this date winning the prize package provided The Bear hasn't guzzled your postie – he also likes chicken dinners so watch out – which might make delivery difficult.

Good luck!

MADISON

BACK IN THE DAY!

A RANDOM TRAWL THROUGH
THE DIRT BIKE RIDER ARCHIVES



September 1993:

With the whole of Europe in mourning after losing another MXdN to Uncle Sam's boys, time to go back 18 years and toss our heads back and laugh in the face of the Yanks as Stefan Everts wins the US 250GP at Budds Creek with grand prix riders sweeping the podium. Capt Kurt Nicoll is cover star while Jack Burnicle takes a long, loving look at classic racing...



October 2003:

Fast forward now 121 months and Gordon Crockard makes the cover after wrapping up his third British title while inside there's a cool Stephen Sword pull-out poster, a test of the 'Kawazuki' 250F, our guide to the British SX season and Jeff Perrett embarks on a two-week roadtrip following the AMA circus...

To trawl through more back issues of DBR simply scan your smartphone over the **QR code** opposite or hook your PC up to www.dirtbikerider.com and click on the Digital Vault button – new issues are constantly being added so keep checking back...



THE REVEREND

NEW BEGINNINGS!

THE SEASON'S ALMOST OVER AND THE SUFFOLK SAXON'S ALREADY PLANNING HIS 2012 CAMPAIGN – FOR JACKY MARTENS' NESTAAN KTM TEAM...

Words by **Jake Nicholls** Photo by **Sutty**

Well the motocross season is nearly over and it seems to have gone in stages for me. Sometimes three or four weekends fly by and then some seem to drag on and take forever. And the penultimate GP in Germany certainly did that...

The track looked pretty cool when I walked it but the track crew did a pants job of getting it ready for Saturday and it was mingling most of the day. And with 'hey Arnaud' jumping into me in the qualifying race and having a big smash I was already on the back foot. Somehow I managed to get back to 12th but Sunday wasn't so good.

The track was awesome with loads and loads of grip but proved to be not so awesome against some of the bikes in the top 10. In the first race I was doing everything I could to get past a couple of guys and I just didn't have the power up the tacky hills. In the second race I got a bad start, then Mike Kras had a big crash next to me and his back wheel came over and hit my elbow which is pretty much made of metal. I straight away lost feeling in my hand and panicked as the last time that happened I cut a huge hole into the elbow. Luckily there was no cut but there was not a lot of feeling either so I couldn't carry on. I was gutted.

We drove straight back to Belgium that night. I trained that week ahead of the last round of the GPs in Italy. That weekend went pretty well and I got a seventh in the first race, crashed during the second but came back to 11th and finished 11th in the championship which I was pumped about. It was the hottest weekend racing I've had for a long time so I was drained after it all.

It was real nice to have my mum come over and watch the GP as well as the Holeshot King. I met them both after getting showered up and having a bit of a lay down and I enjoyed my first beers since my birthday in April when I had a broken ankle. They slid down lovely – a bit too well actually – and four beers later we had a massive pizza and then Blu drove us all in our Fiat Panda rentajobbie back to the track where there was word of a party.

A few sketchy moments later and we arrived. They had a DJ booth and bar set up in the factory KTM awning but no beer! So it was vodka and Red Bulls for a while until the beer made a return which was spot on and I and the other riders got loose. Sure enough, I woke up the next morning in the hotel room confused. I was laid on a towel wearing new pants so I had to ask Blu the million dollar question. "Er, did I sh*t myself last night?"

Turns out I hadn't! Blu had dropped mum and Steve off at their hotels then had to try and find her way back to our hotel in the middle of nowhere without a sat nav

and me with my head out the window hurling my guts up. Then she stuck me in the shower once we finally found the hotel. Good old girl, ay!

So we hopped on the plane back to Belgium. I signed that week with Jacky Martens' Nestaan KTM team to race MX2 GPs again as well as the Dutch championship and selected Belgian championship rounds. I'm real happy with the deal but it was a shame to end my three-year relationship with Roger Magee's KTM UK team and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank him for all that he's done for me. It's has been a good three years and we've come a long way and had great fun in that time. So thank you to Roger, Joanne and Roz Magee!

Thanks also to Andy and all from HM Plant for great support and also to Howard from Bott for being a good old boy and generally a top banana and to everyone else that has helped the team over the last three years. It's a shame that I will be losing my mechanic Wayne but I'm also over the moon for him as he will be working for the factory KTM team next year – for Tixier! Ouch! Kick in the teeth for me or what? He's got my ride and my mechanic! Good job I gave him a few flying shoulders on the dance floor in Italy ha ha. Good luck to Wayneo though, what an amazing mechanic you are!


On the plus side, I will have Olly Stone working for me next year so that should be good as he's a nice guy and seems a great mechanic and English too. It's a shame I won't be racing in the UK much but the team's workshop is a two-minute drive from where we live in Belgium and the furthest Dutch championship is less than three hours away so there will be a lot less travelling for us next year. And if I'm honest I don't enjoy the British championship nowadays with the schoolboy type schedule of three 20-minute races. I feel I get nothing out of it and simply don't enjoy it.

I train so hard throughout the winter and in the season and I don't get to thrive on this in a 20-minute race. I'm not saying the Dutch championship is going to be amazing blah, blah, blah but it does have two 30-minute races. But when I get a chance I will come back and race at home because I'm British and I love our country more than anywhere.

I had my first weekend off since my comeback in May last weekend so I trained hard in the sand ahead of Hawkstone and of course next year, then raced at Culham this weekend just gone which was up and down. I won the first race in MX2 then DNF'd the second one with a bike problem which was frustrating.

That's all for now – thanks for reading...

Go hard #45



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BLOOD SWEAT AND GEARS

Welcome, race fans, to our monthly column keeping you up to date with what's happening in the world of off-road sport.

First up, the news you've all been waiting for – the launch date for the new series of Blood, Sweat and Gears. The new shows start to air on Saturday November 12 with the first episode being shown at 10am, 2pm, 8pm and 1am the next morning. So plenty of chance to catch it. Sky+ if you can to relive the excitement over and over again.

These are the air times every week for 20 glorious weeks. Our series this year takes a slightly different slant as we bring you more than just race action. The shows will bring more human interest with rider profiles and during the motocross events we get to see the lives of the competitors when we mic up the dads as their sons take to the track, giving us some truly 'TV Gold' moments. The series will also air across Europe starting on December 14 and is being beamed into a total of 52 countries in all.

Putting together the shows has been very time consuming and I've only had one outing on the RMZ450 since my last column when I'm glad to report I kept it on two wheels, much to my body's relief.

Now we come to the close of the season and several things remind me that winter is just around the corner. Firstly, my house being invaded by spiders. Big spiders. B Movie monsters! The second thing is that the Weston Beach Race is upon us and I'm very happy that the 'on or off' thing is now sorted because I feel that this is one of the most important events in the off-road calendar being the most recognisable to the general public.

You can talk about MXGPs and British championships etc and you will only get a blank expression, mention Weston and the response is wholly different. It is an institution that deserves our full support and we are glad to be back and filming again this year.

The third thing is the International Dirt Bike show, again another important event where the off-road community can come together. For us it's more a social occasion where we can catch up with friends old and new and make our plans for next year and meet you, the viewers.

Now, a few things for next year which is shaping up to be even bigger than before, including several new shows to run alongside BSG. One of which will be familiar to trials fans from the '70s and '80s with a catchy theme tune. Watch this space. Till next month, ride safe...

Paul Minihane

BLOOD SWEAT AND GEARS will be back on the Extreme Sports Channel (Sky 419/ Virgin 527) on November 12



CROCKSTAR

HELLO DAVE!

GORDY GOES RETRO AT FARLEIGH WHERE ARMED WITH A RM400 TWINSHOCK HE TAKES A CERTAIN LEGEND TO THE ROPES...

Words by Gordon Crockard Photo by Suttly

Yes readers, I'm reporting in with two sore arms. I got my flu vaccination and pneumonia jabs this morning. One in each arm, once a year. I have to get it due to not having a spleen and I need the vaccines to help protect me from getting illness and infections.

Irony was running high last week as I got a rotten cold on the same day that the doctor's letter came to tell me I was due for my renewal jabs. Sometimes I deserve to get sick when I consider what I put my system through and expect it to withstand the extensive pushing. Anyhow, I have tremendous faith in the medical science department and I have trust in the doctors who keep us alive whenever we need them to.

Races coming up for me are all supercross. I have the British Supercross Championship to try and win again and I also will be taking on the Australian SX series for the first time. I have good energy for both of those championships and I look forward to all of the excitement that comes with these ventures. I have some good friends in Australia and I will see what develops from the trip.

I didn't race much in September – however, I did ride a lot. The most recent racing I did was the Vets des Nations at Farleigh Castle. All of my appreciation for motocross is celebrated at that annual event. The track, the bikes, the riders and the gear is all from my favourite era and still to this day my head is full of useless knowledge from when I was a kid who studied the sport relentlessly.

I rode three classes on Saturday on three different bikes. A Suzuki RM400 twinshock, an '87 CR500 and an '89 CR250. I was a busy boy and missed out on getting a good look around the pits at all the superbikes. The highlight for me was having handlebar to handlebar track time with Jeff Stanton. His technique and riding style is fantastic. I only ever watched him on video tape so in the flesh was ace.

I ran some old retro Apico gear. It was Alan Morrison's gear from back when he was at his best in GPs riding for Silkolene Honda. I had some fun messing with Dave Thorpe in the first twinshock race. I don't think he knew it was me

because he didn't appear to see the funny side to any of my block passes, brake checks, to the ropes runs shouting 'yes Dave', intentional goon riding, over shoulder stares down the straights and general fooling around.

I mean, I would expect Kurt Nicoll to be all business and strictly serious in any race scenario against anybody but that's likely because he's still trying to prove he should have been world champion and he's still running that campaign. But Thorpey? He's King David so he can relax and just chill out and enjoy the ride. He'll probably wipe me out on the first lap of Farleigh practice next year to teach me to have a little respect for the King!

Edward Allingham's asked me to help him at the Under 21 des Nations in Belgium this year. He's representing Team Ireland at the event. I did that four times when I was under 21 until I won the event in 1998. They have a rule that you are not allowed to compete at the event again once you win it. I'm looking forward to going and doing all I can to help Ed and the team.

We've been doing some expeditions up the mountains on our trials bikes in the dark. Headlights are crucial and concentration paramount. The runs take around three hours and we take spare fuel and a bumbag tool kit as it's one big loop with no opportunities to get rescued other than by a helicopter. We do it for fun and adventure but disguised in there is actual training and bike skill development.

We've had some dramas involving blown bulbs, running out of fuel, rad hoses getting holes in them, not seeing the water leak due to the darkness, bikes over-heating, bikes catching fire, long walks home to the van, police questioning why would some guy be walking through a town in muddy gear with no bike at 12:15am – you know, usual stuff.

It is becoming a concern of mine where and how I am going to continue to get my kicks. As long as I'm laughing and smiling I know I'm going the right direction.

Catch me if you can!

SPECIAL GREG!

GREG EVANS IS CROWNED 2011 BRITISH ENDURO CHAMPION AT THE SEASON ENDING NATTERJACK ENDURO WHERE FAST EDDY FINALLY ANNOUNCES HE'S HANGING UP HIS BEC BOOTS

Words and photo by Jonty Edmunds

Going down to the final day of the series, the battle to be crowned 2011 BEC champion finally gets settled as the REME-organised Natterjack Enduro sees Welshman Greg Evans secure the #1 ranking for the first time.

For many the best event of the championship, the season finale gets a serious make-over for 2011 with the infamous sand bowl motocross test prepped like a GP MX track. And with a time schedule that's super-tight everybody are kept on their toes – including event winner David Knight.

But it's Greg Evans who has most to celebrate as the KTM rider puts the disappointment of crashing out of the International Six Days Enduro behind him and celebrates his double European and British Enduro Championship successes.

"I was gutted when I broke my collarbone in Finland but winning the European and now the British Enduro Championship makes up for it," beams Greg. "It's been a mixed season with a few spills but generally I've been pretty consistent. I didn't feel under too much pressure coming into the final two days because I had a bit of a points advantage. Everything worked out perfectly and it's great to have won the title."

For Knighter victory on both days is hard fought. With the demands of a whooped out course, technical enduro test and beach-like motocross test taking their toll on the big man in only his second two-day event since undergoing double hip surgery, he's simply pleased to make it to the end of each day. "It's not been easy this weekend but I'm pleased to be back racing and working towards full fitness," explains DK. "My hips just get really stiff and kind of seize up – they're not strong enough yet."

Second to David on both days at the Natterjack and second to Evans in the overall BEC standings is Tom Sagar who's disappointed not to have gone one better. Winner of the Elite class in the Husqvarna ACU British Sprint Enduro Championship, Sagar's sure that without injury he could have made a real run for the BEC title.

"All credit to Greg but I struggled with injury at a few events," explains Tom. "With only a few points eventually separating us in first and second, well, I'm sure I could have challenged for the title if I'd been 100 per cent all season. I had some good days and some not so good days but hopefully next year I'll be able to avoid injury and battle for the title."

Championship class newcomers Danny McCanney and Jonny Walker secure third and fourth in the overall Championship class standings following mixed results at the Natterjack. But along with junior ISDE team-mate Alex Rockwell they show that there's certainly no lack of young talent in the BEC's top class.

But while the future looks bright as far as the upcoming next generation of riders goes, for one competitor the 2011 Natterjack signals a milestone in his career. After more than two decades of service to the series Paul Edmondson confirms the time has come to take a step backwards and bring to an end his important commitment to the British championship.

"It's time to step back from a full-time commitment to the BEC and focus on other things," explains Paul. "I've certainly enjoyed some great times but I can't put the work in away from the events that I used to. There's a great crop of younger riders coming through now and I know I won't be able to fight for top three results next year."

BEC

FINAL STANDINGS

1	Greg Evans	KTM	149
2	Tom Sagar	KTM	146
3	Danny McCanney	Gas Gas	119
4	Jonny Walker	KTM	109
5	Paul Edmondson	KTM	100
6	David Knight	KTM	100
7	Alex Rockwell	Husaberg	97
8	Jamie Lewis	KTM	77
9	Si Wakely	Husaberg	74
10	Ashley Wood	KTM	71



Greg Evans is the 2011 British Enduro champ

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SWORDY

BRING IT ON!

WITH A NEW TEAM, NEW MOTIVATION AND A FULL SEASON OF SX COMING UP, SWORDY'S LOOKING FORWARD TO GETTING BACK IN THE SADDLE. WHEN HE GETS BACK FROM HIS HOLS IN SPAIN...

Words by Stephen Sword Photo by Sully

After a month of rehab on my ankle I got back to training and riding in preparation for the first supercross round at Sheffield on October 22. Last year I didn't race the whole series but this year I've committed to all five rounds. It should be great fun and something to work towards over the winter in preparation for 2012.

I have my deal sorted for next year and I'll be riding for Suzuki by Tas which I'm delighted about. I'm really looking forward to the change and new challenge.

The kids, Jodie and I are in the south of Spain on a week's holiday as I write – we have borrowed an apartment from someone we know and the weather is mega. However, I'm not getting to sit in it much as having Ayrton and baby means there's not much time to relax! Luckily, there's a big park right next to us so that's a great place to tire Ayrton out. He also loves swimming so we are in the pool all the time and when at the beach he will sit and build motocross tracks in the sand. I used to always do that too so I can sit with him for hours!

It's a nice break for us all and my brother has come with us with his girlfriend so we have help! I'm up every morning swimming in the pool to keep my training going ready for the SX. Starlia is being so chilled considering how hot it is so she is def the easy child out of the two for now. We are going to go out for food tonight so that should be interesting!

As soon as I get back I will be riding SX tracks all the time to get bike fit ready for Sheffield. I am fit physically now so halfway there. It will be good racing with good riders – it always makes you want to win more when you know there are other strong contenders. I will be doing both classes and it will be great to get back on a 250 again. I think that riding both will help me as I'm usually stronger as the day goes on so more track time is a bonus as fitness won't be a problem.

Hopefully Ayrton will be able to come and watch as he has never watched a live supercross before but loves watching it on TV. He's so obsessed with bikes so to be able to see the whole track from inside and of course get food at the same time he will think all his

wishes have come true! He's learnt to ride his bike and pretends to kick start it and with my goggles, helmet and gloves on he thinks he is so cool. He goes so fast but hasn't got to grips with the brakes so either slams into a wall or jumps off in full motion. Needless to say we have had cuts and bruises but he gets back on and does it again. I reckon he needs to learn fear before going anywhere near an MX bike or he will really hurt himself.

I went to the Red Bull at Culham to sort a few things out and took Ayrton. I wanted to be riding. I will be doing that race next year. The track was good, they also had things for kids so Ayrton met Fireman Sam and went on all the rides so it was great for him.

I have sorted out my garage at home and come across so much old kit that I use to wear as a child and teenager. It all looks so dated now but back then it was the coolest stuff around. It was good to look back at all the old pictures also.

I'm now going to be preparing for next year. I've got some different things going on over the winter and also a different approach which will make me 100 per cent ready. It will be a tough class with the riders in MX1 but that just gives me the motivation I need to push myself. Mentally I will be ready to win! I believe with the bike I have there will be no reason not to have a fantastic shot at the title as there will be nothing holding me back.

I have been off the bike far too long, my ankle is better and my shoulder's as good as ever so I can't wait to get on it. My injuries have ruined my year but that's all part of being a professional MX rider. I don't know any rider that doesn't get hurt – it's how you recover mentally as it usually makes you more hungry for success. Well, it always does me! Plus I want an MX1 title before I stop.

Next month will be busy for me and I can't wait. I don't need an off-season as I've had so much time off and once the SXs start I will be flat-out. Anyway, that's me for another month – next month will be far more interesting as it will be all about riding! Wish me luck...

Braaaaaaaap

Stephen Sword #2
dirtbikerider 21



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DIRT BIKE RIDER AWARDS 2011

VOTE NOW FOR YOUR OFF-ROAD HEROES OF THE YEAR...

The votes have been pouring in and there are already some clear favourites pulling ahead but that could all change as there's still plenty of time to get online and vote in our 2011 awards.

One man has stood head and shoulders above all other riders in Britain this year – PAR Honda's powerhouse Brad Anderson. The 30-year-old's already sewn up the Maxxis British championship and retained his Red Bull Pro Nationals crown. Add to this his fighting fifth overall at Matterley Basin and a ballsy MXdN ride and it's safe to say he's been in the form of his life in 2011.

But competition is tight this year and Ando's achievements have to be measured against a whole raft of Brits who've been doing the business week-in, week-out.

In the GPs CLS Monster Energy Kawasaki star Tommy Searle has been banging out the podiums, took the overall in France and finished the British GP on the second step of the box. And then there's his teenage team-mate Max Anstie

who has rounded out his rookie season with a debut podium at the final GP of the year in Italy. And what about Jake Nicholls who despite missing the start of the season through injury has been getting faster – and hairier – every week? Or speedy Scot Dean Wilson who's claimed the AMA 250cc title? Or newly-crowned Red Bull Pro Nationals MX2 champion Elliott Banks-Browne?

The point we're trying to make here is that we've got true talent in depth – more so than for years – and Brad despite all his victories is no shoo-in for a DBR award.

On the international stage two men have dominated the GPs – defending MX1 world champ Antonio Cairoli and German sensation Ken Roczen. But even they face some stiff opposition. In the USA Ryan Villopoto has added the 450cc Nationals title to his SX crown but for many Chad Reed has been the hero Stateside, a status he's earned through his indoor performances not to mention the way he kept going after that infamous Millville crash.

And closer to home we've been lucky to have Swiss missile Arnaud Tonus gracing and racing the Maxxis series where he's picked up the MX2 title in his debut season.

In the hardcore world of enduro and its many spin-offs the great David Knight's picked up an MBE for his services to the sport but in a season marked by injury to the Manxman it's allowed others to shine through – most notably Tom Sagar. And let's not forget veteran Paul Edmondson who picked up an amazing 17th ISDE gold medal or trials rider turned extreme star Graham Jarvis who's won just about every event he's entered in 2011.

Below we've printed a short-list of riders who we think should be considered for a DBR gong. But it's by no means set in stone and when you hook up to **dirtZone** to vote via **dirtbikerider.com** you'll find an option to add your own favourite rider in each category. The polls close on **October 28** with the winners announced on the main stage on the Saturday at the International Dirt Bike Show at Stoneleigh Park...

BRITISH OFF-ROAD PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

Brad Anderson
Jake Nicholls
Max Anstie
David Knight
Billy MacKenzie
Kristian Whatley

Other.....

BEST BRITISH YOUTH MOTOCROSS RACER

Adam Sterry
Ryan Houghton
Conrad Mewse
Alexander Brown
Ben Watson
James Dunn

Other.....

BEST BRITISH OFF-ROAD RACER

Tom Sagar
Graham Jarvis
David Knight
Paul Edmondson
Greg Evans
Jonny Walker

Other.....

BEST INTERNATIONAL OFF-ROAD RACER

Juha Salminen
Mika Ahola
Antoine Meo
Eero Remes
Taddy Blazusiak
Kurt Caselli

Other.....

BEST BRITISH MOTOCROSS RACER

Brad Anderson
Tommy Searle
Max Anstie
Jake Nicholls
Elliott Banks-Browne
Dean Wilson

Other.....

BEST INTERNATIONAL MOTOCROSS RACER

Antonio Cairoli
Ken Roczen
Ryan Villopoto
Chad Reed
Arnaud Tonus
Ryan Dungey

Other.....

BEST FMX RIDER

Jeremy Stenberg
Nate Adams
Chris Birch
Robbie Maddison
Andre Villa
Jackson Strong

Other.....

CRASHER OF THE YEAR

Billy MacKenzie
Chad Reed
Matiss Karro
James Stewart
Trey Canard
Zach Osborne

Other.....





MAX POWER

ON THE BOX!

MAX ENDS HIS DEBUT GP SEASON ON A HIGH BEFORE FLYING BACK TO CALIFORNIA TO PREPARE FOR SUPERCROSS...

Words by **Max Anstie** Photo courtesy **Monster Energy**

So after a long season spent in Europe, in the sunshine of Italy I finally got on the box. I didn't make it easy for myself by all means but despite smashing into the fence and getting around some people three times I was on the podium and ready to get back to the USA. So straight after the race we headed to the airport to get out of there and get back to my SX tracks, gym and pretty sick pad in CA.

I have had a couple weeks off from riding. Just hitting the rocks on my trials bike, playing with snakes and chasing my dogs is what I have been up to. It was princess Zoey's big second birthday and the whole crew of Disney characters were there so I spent the day eating all the cake and playing on the bouncy castle.

So that was a pretty good day and then my buddy flew me out to Colorado where I spent a week driving around in a Corvette, training with the Denver Nuggets (massive basketball team) and I actually got asked to go to a school homecoming dance. So I'm proper excited about the whole getting in my tuxedo and shredding the dance floor thing. I watched the Inbetweeners movie and Neil gave me a good idea of what to do.

I have been learning and understanding different nutritional things with the help of all the guys up here and have literally just finished a

work out with Steve Hess (Google him), the sickest trainer ever. He had me doing push ups on bungee cords, throwing ropes around and picking up cards. The place where I did my training was in the stadium that the Nuggets play in and coincidentally Taylor Swift was there doing her sound checks for a massive concert while I was working out 100ft away. Pretty cool. And by the way she said I was way hotter than that knob from Twilight and much more buff. Ha!

I can't wait to get back in the gym tomorrow where he said we are going to be fighting MMA cagefighters but I have to wear my full MX gear! Crazy. People pay this guy \$10,000 a month for training and when you see what he does and the place he is running you can see why.

After this week I am heading back to CA where I begin my riding preparation for West Coast Supercross. I'm super-pumped for next year and A1 – can't wait to skip those whoopedoods and whip those triples. The Unit (my Special Forces team) have been preserved and the work is paying off so I can run the perfect season next year indoors and especially at the GPs. My road to success is under construction!

Speak to you all next time...

Max
dirtbikerider **23**

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CHRISTOPHE POURCEL

THIS MONTH IT'S THE TURN OF THE ENIGMA THAT IS CHRISTOPHE POURCEL WHO, CONTRARY TO WHAT YOU MAY HAVE BEEN LED TO BELIEVE, TURNS OUT TO BE A DOWN-TO-EARTH, NORMAL KIND OF BLOKE...

Interview and photo by JP O'Connell

Q: How competitive were you and your brother as you grew up and who was the fastest?

Toby Farwell, Stockport

A: "We had often similar times during training but during races Seb took more bad starts and it was harder for him to get the results as me. But he won GPs when he took good starts."

Q: While you were riding in America the commentators would describe you as coming across as 'hard work' for the press or that you were a bit 'aloof'. Had they just missed the point that you were French and that it was more of a language barrier thing?

Nick Pallister, Braintree

A: "I am a French guy and for American people it's hard to accept that I beat their riders. So relations between me and the media has been more difficult... I tried to make effort and now with more experience I will make in the future more effort."

Q: I followed the Moto Concepts Yamaha deal fairly closely as it was good to see you out on a bike again but what went wrong?

Nathan Williams, Lymington

A: "As Mitch Payton said in his interview on LEBIG website: 'Moto Concept didn't give him the tools needed to do good with the YZF, maybe because they had not enough budget or were not ready to welcome such a good rider.' What else can I say?"

Q: What means the most to you – your world championship or your first SX title?

Gary Shortland, Walton Heath

A: "Both. For me it's two different titles. But I got my first SX title when I was back from a very bad injury. The recovery was a tough time for me and when I came back it was an awesome private victory."

Q: How long are you signed to CLS for – can we look forward to watching you do a full MX1 season in 2012?

Geoff Haskell, Corby

A: "I will stay with CLS Monster Energy Kawasaki Pro Circuit in 2012 and I will try to win the MX1 title with them next year."

Q: After your big crash in Ireland has your outlook on racing changed at all?

Gareth Price, Carmarthen

A: "Yes, my accident brought me to a new point of view on life. Now my health, my family, my friends are in front of motocross. Also, when I don't feel good on a bike I will not push to go fast to take risks. It's the way it is now and that is also why I stopped with Moto Concept..."

Q: Coming off the back of a successful 2010 season we were all expecting to see you enter the AMA MX1 class on a factory team for this year. Obviously that didn't happen and the rumours over here were that you just wanted too much money and priced yourself out of the market...

Martin Lock, Great Yarmouth

A: "At the end of 2010 I had a shoulder injury and I missed the title. The recovery took time, until the end of the year. It was difficult to begin the SX series in January. I wanted to stay with Kawasaki because I like those bikes. Things were hard to manage because Pro Circuit is not involved directly in MX1 – it was not possible to put all things together. For the Nationals there was no more room in factory teams, I went to Moto Concepts and you know what happened after..."

Q: What you have managed to do since receiving those horrific injuries at the Irish GP is absolutely amazing. How good did it feel to roll out at Anaheim after over a year away and win?

Jason Laws, Bath

A: "Just unreal. I worked so hard on my mental and my physical conditions. I took my time and I needed to be reborn. It was possible for me to stop motocross because my injury was bad. First I was happy to be able to walk again, it gave me the energy to come back to sport."

Q: You beat Cairoli to the MX2 title back in 2006 – do you feel confident that you could beat him next year in the MX1 class?

Ian Stamp, Sudbury

A: "I am able to beat Cairoli next year in MX1. It will be very hard because he is a fantastic rider. I will have to be ready and to fight hard. It will be fun."

Q: You had the 2010 Nationals title in the bag until you crashed, handing the title to Canard. You didn't seem to take the loss too badly and seemed genuinely pleased for Trey. Is that because you respect him more than the other riders...

Stu Greene, Dartford

A: "I respect all the riders. I am happy when a rider wins, of course I prefer when it's me! I did a mistake, Trey won, it's normal."

Q: With the French des Nations team so strong how confident were you to take your first win since 2001?

Bryan Fearnley, Ringwood

A: "The French team was very strong and I enjoyed a lot riding with my team-mates and the FFM staff. The victory was possible but I was not lucky."

Q: Do you prefer the GP format where the racing is spread over two days or the AMA format where it all takes place on the Saturday?

Johnny Wilson, High Wycombe

A: "I prefer when it takes place on one day. Also for the technical side it's less hard for the bikes, the crew. I understand also that it's good for the public to spread the events on two days. But we can see now that a lot of GP riders are injured and I think that two days racing will not help to decrease this."

STEVE DIXON SUPREME TEAM BOSS

Send your questions to the Bike It Cosworth Monster Yamaha boss via dbrproprobe@googlemail.com



KEN ROCZEN - 2011 MX2 WORLD CHAMPION
TONY CAIROLI - 2011 MX1 WORLD CHAMPION

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KTM

BRIGHT'S BOYS

THIS MONTH WE SNUGGLE UP UNDER THE PULSE DB RACING HONDA AWNING AS ELLIOTT BANKS-BROWNE AND JAMES COTTRELL FACE OFF...

Interviews and photo by Rosie O'Donnell

DBR: Who would you like to play you in a film of your life?

EBB: "I don't really know – probably Will Ferrell, just because he's funny."

JC: "Will Ferrell."

DBR: When did you last clean an air filter?

EBB: "Two years ago I reckon!"

JC: "Last week actually..."

DBR: What was the last lie that you told and who was it to?

EBB: "[Laughing] I probably tell too many lies about what I'm doing and where I am."

JC: "To you about the air filter!"

DBR: Could you check your own valve clearances?

EBB: "Yep."

JC: "No but I know Elliott will."

DBR: Something you eat that you know you shouldn't?

EBB: "Definitely sweets, I really like them too much."

JC: "My nan makes these awesome Pot Du Cremes and they're so bad for you – they're just pure caramel but I love them."

DBR: You're in second and on the leader's rear wheel – do you take him out in the last corner?

EBB: "It depends who it is but, yeah, probably!"

JC: "Definitely."

DBR: Do you own a pair of pyjamas?

EBB: "I do but I never really wear them. They're stripy Calvin Klein ones."

JC: "Yeah, I've got some Corona pyjama pants."

DBR: What is the highlight of your career so far?

EBB: "I finished ninth in a GP this year which was pretty cool, the whole of last season racing against Martin Barr in the Red Bull Pro Nationals was a good feeling and also getting my first podium at a British championship was good. I can't really pick one out over the other, they were all good points."

JC: "Probably the British championship at Desertmartin this year. I qualified sixth, holeshot the first and last races and led the last race for a lap or two, it felt pretty good!"

DBR: What car do you drive?

EBB: "A VW Transporter van."

JC: "I've got a VW van."

DBR: And if money were no object?

EBB: "A Bugatti Veyron or a Rolls Royce Phantom, let's go with the Rolls Royce actually."

JC: "That car with three wheels – a Robin Reliant! But I'd have a few of them!"

DBR: Have you ever blamed a poor result on a non-existent mechanical issue?

EBB: "Yes probably. When I was racing schoolboy then I'm sure I must have but being pro, no."

JC: "No, never."

DBR: If you could change anything about yourself what would it be?

EBB: "I'd like to have Stefan Everts' calf muscles!"

JC: "I'd like bigger calf muscles."

DBR: If you could meet any person – alive or dead – who would it be?

EBB: "I'd like to meet Ricky Carmichael I reckon."

JC: "Steve Irwin."

DBR: If you could have any superpower for a week what would it be?

EBB: "Flying."

JC: "I'd like to be able to fly."

DBR: If you were shipwrecked on an island what three things would you want with you?

EBB: "My phone, although I don't know how I'm going to charge it, a girl and my dog – I'm not going to eat the dog though!"

JC: "I'd take Mila Kunis, a knife and I reckon my Jack Russell, Dudley."

DBR: What's been the most embarrassing thing you've done while drunk?

EBB: "I've done far too many embarrassing things while I've been drunk and I probably can't tell you any of them – just use your imagination!"

JC: "How long have you got!"

DBR: What's your most prized material possession?

EBB: "My new Storck road bike that I spent a ridiculous amount of money on."

JC: "My guns."

DBR: Favourite race you've ever been in?

EBB: "The British GP is always cool just because you're riding in front of the home fans so probably the last one we had at Mallory."

JC: "The Desertmartin race was cool or when I qualified for the junior world championship about four years ago and raced in Finland."

DBR: Be honest, how often do you Google yourself?

EBB: "Not often. Okay hands up, I used to – I'm not gonna lie – but not any more."

JC: "I think once and not a lot came up – perhaps I'll have another look in a year's time!"

DBR: Blonde or brunette?

EBB: "Brunette."

JC: "Brunette."

DBR: Is winning a race better than sex?

EBB: "It's a close call, I can't choose!"

JC: "Yep."

DBR: One thing about your riding style that you'd like to improve?

EBB: "Keeping my toes in more. It frustrates me if I see a picture and my toes are out so I need to concentrate on tidying that up a bit."

JC: "I just want to be able to whip better."

DBR: What's your favourite film?

EBB: "Step Brothers."

JC: "Step Brothers."

DBR: What's your most annoying habit?

EBB: "Biting my nails."

JC: "When people speak to me and ask me a question I hear them but I still say 'huh?' – I know that I do it and I hate it!"

DBR: What's the worst motocross-related decision you've made during your career?

EBB: "I don't think I've made one, I think things usually happen for a reason and I'm happy with everything so far."

JC: "I think I used to crash way too much and I think most of it was through just making stupid decisions – taking chances that I shouldn't – and I've always hurt myself."

DBR: If you had to permanently give up either the internet, mobile phone or TV which would it be?

EBB: "TV..."

JC: "The internet because Facebook is a nightmare!"

DBR: Something about yourself that nobody else knows?

EBB: "I like cleaning stuff. If I start cleaning my bike or my room then I have to clean it properly. I mean I can live with it messy but if I get into my cleaning mode then it's got to be spotless – bit of OCD!"

JC: "I love hunting and go three or four times a week."

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Life Without Vibrations

Rick Bird and his team-mates helped Ireland to a fine finish in France



WHAT A LOAD OF RUBBISH!

A NEGATIVE REPORT IN THE IRISH PRESS TAKES THE SHEEN OFF A TYPICALLY GUTSY PERFORMANCE AT THE MXdN – AND OUR MAN IN THE EMERALD ISLE AIN'T HAPPY ABOUT IT...

Words by Stevie Mills Photo by Nuno Laranjeira

Hot off the press at the time of writing is the exciting news that Graeme Irwin has signed with the Samsung Yamaha team for next season which should be great for both the G Man and Embo! Graeme will compete in the Maxxis series and Red Bull Pro Nationals in the MX2 class along with some special 'one-off' rides throughout the season.

"I am so pumped to be joining Roy's team for 2012 – after riding their bike and spending the day with the team I knew, right away, that this is where I need to be to rebuild my career," Graeme told Blarney. Embo seems happy as well. "The boy took to the bike like a fish to water and he gelled with it and my mechanics very naturally. We are delighted to have Graeme onboard and look forward to working with him."

The midnight oil has been burning in the Relentless Suzuki by TAS camp and Phil Neill's team will again spearhead Suzuki's MX efforts and field riders in both MX1 and MX2 for 2012. Word is they've signed a certain Stephen Sword which should give them a great chance to lift some major silverware next year...

What is it about the Irish motocross press? The headline 'Ireland Not on the Pace' is entirely out of order! C'mon, there are pizzas bigger than our country yet against the odds we gather up our pennies, pack a bag of determination and set sail for the biggest event of the year grinning from ear to ear.

Now Lady Luck can be a right bitch and Barty hit the deck in his qualifier – as did Stuey – and Rick's brand new front wheel collapsed after failing the toughness check set by the rock-hard French hills. So it was déjà vu mon amis – B Final here we come! And winning the B Final

in fine style put the lads into the Main Event and we can't expect more than that. So when some of the world's best racers lined up for the first points-payer of the day Team Ireland already had a moto under their belt.

So after winning the B Final and finishing 19th overall the headline in question should have read 'Team Ireland Mix It With World's Best! Well done lads...

The Norman Watt Ulster Premier Championship was decided at Tandragee Moto Park and Richard Bird on the Watt Motorcycles/Mototec KTM was delighted to add the MX1 crown to his MX2 championship of a couple of seasons ago. Richard rode well throughout the season and is a popular champion.

Watt Kawasaki-mounted Thomas Merton filled the runner-up position after recording possibly his best season in a long and well-documented career. Davy Gorman has been making steady progress over the past few seasons and took the final podium position for the injury-hit AJ Elite team. This fantastic result will go some way towards relieving some of the pain felt during the 2011 season which saw team-mates Jason Garrett and Andrew O'Brien forced out of action due to injuries.

The name of Tommy Merton will be etched again on the Ulster Nutt Travel MX2 Championship silverware. The Monster Kawasaki rider may not have clocked up as many wins as Wayne Garrett but when the music stopped he was the man on the top step!

Dromore man Ryan Adair's consistency not only paved the way for his first ever MX2 Ulster Championship podium result, in the final moto of the season and by a mere one point he secured

second place at the expense of multi-time champ Wayne Garrett. Southern Centre pilot Jim O'Neil and new Monster Energy Kawasaki signing Ed Allingham filled out the top five in the series.

The Glenhead Engineering-sponsored Grade B series always serves up some of the best racing and this year was no exception. Relentless by TAS Suzuki RMZ250 rider Scott Hamilton fought tooth and nail for every point. Scott, from the village of Moira, was in a full-on battle throughout the entire season with second-placed rider Ryan Glover. Glen McCormick made a big noise in his first adult season, the Carrick teenager joined the series in round two and won the final seven races of the season aboard a standard Watt Motorcycles/Agnew Recovery/Risk Racing KTM 125.

The Russell's Motorcycles Grade C MX1/3 title was won by Chris Lappen on his TM from the man with the greatest number of wins throughout the season – namely Ray Brownle – with Ricky Portis carrying the family banner to the third step of the podium. Jordan Wade from Downpatrick took top honours in the Spence Racing Grade C MX2 Championship from Andrew McKee – with seven race wins under his belt Andrew's two DNFs kept him off the top step. Christopher Cully's last round efforts secured his third place trophy.

Oh yes, if any of you wish to call by and say hello I will be at the Dirt Bike Show with the rest of the DBR crew and will be working on the Risk Racing Europe stand E04C.

See you all soon...

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Colour Options



Paul Eddy, with big brother Derrick watching on, gets stuck into some fettling sometime back in the day...



END OF AN ERA!

WITH THE NEWS THAT PAUL EDMONDSON'S RETIRING FROM FULL-TIME BEC COMPETITION IT'S TIME TO PAY TRIBUTE TO A TRUE LEGEND OF THE SPORT...

Words by Jonty Edmunds

For the past two decades one rider's name has featured either at the top or very near the top of the British Enduro Championship no matter what.

He's collected countless overall BEC titles, topped just about every event going, ridden successfully for several different manufacturers, inspired more than his fair share of riders and as both a keen-to-impress teenager and later as a more laidback 40-something always given 100 per cent.

That rider is, of course, Paul Edmondson. And at the recent Natterjack Enduro Fast Eddy announced his retirement from full-time competition in the BEC.

At his best Eddy could run rings around everyone else in the BEC. Sometimes it would be in the dry, sometimes it would be in the wet. Sometimes it would be the weekend after a world championship event. Sometimes it would be with a hangover. Prior to the arrival of David Knight, Paul was the UK's only international enduro competitor capable of not only mixing it with the world's best but, more importantly, beating them.

And during those years in which 'Little Ed' flew the flag for Blighty, firstly in the European Enduro Championship and later the Enduro World Championship, his participation in the BEC brought something to events that no

other rider could.

Longevity is something every sportsman or woman longs for in a career and it's something Eddy's delivered by the bucket load, despite injuries along the way. Be it on an 80cc Honda at the start of his career or a 250F KTM during his final season, Paul has remained there or thereabouts for more than two decades.

What's amazing is that during that time only one rider – David Knight – has stepped out of Eddy's shadow to take over and lead the way both nationally and internationally.

If I remember back to the first time I saw Eddy competing in the BEC it was when he made light work of the competition at the opening round of the series – the Breckland Enduro – aboard a 125cc Husqvarna. I don't remember if Paul went on to become world champion that year or exactly what year it was even but I remember as if it were yesterday the speed and style in which he raced around the sandy Norfolk special test.

To this day Eddy has remained competitive. Unable to match the commitment given by many of his younger rivals, Eddy's bike handling skills continue to be some of the very best in the world. Still able to do things on a bike that few others can, when conditions take a turn for the worse he excels.

The experience Paul has gained over the years means he knows every trick in the book. But it's his varied and high-level skill-set that in more recent times has kept him ahead of his younger rivals. Able to deal with any extreme test, any wet, grass-covered Welsh motocross test or any mud 'n ruts Scottish enduro test, Paul can even make light work of a supercross track if needed – something few others in the BEC could.

But like all off-road motorcycle racers of a certain age, ball-shrinkage – the officially recognised condition that prevents a rider from laying it all on the line like he once did – has, in part, made Paul realise that it's time to step away from the BEC scene. No longer quite as hungry to win as he once was and riding simply because he enjoys it and not because he gets paid to anymore, Paul bows out of the British enduro series having been there, done that and got the t-shirt more times than he's walked a special test.

Eddy's contribution to the UK enduro scene has been vast, his participation in the BEC having given the series increased credibility and profile. I'm sure I'm not alone in saying it's been a pleasure watching him compete over the years.

Enjoy your retirement Eddy...



PULSE RACING ROLL-X THROTTLE TUBE

The Pulse Roll-X Throttle Tube is one of the latest additions to the Pulse family of products. The Throttle Tube and Cam are CNC machined from a solid billet of 6000 series aluminium and are available to fit leading four-stroke models from Honda, Kawasaki, Yamaha, Suzuki and KTM. The key benefits of the throttle tube include its strength opposed to the stock part and the overall smooth action the rider receives through its anti-friction design. It's priced competitively with free shipping if ordered through the pulse-mx.com website where DBR readers will also receive a free pair of grip donuts and a **discount code** that entitles them to **10 per cent off** all further orders – enter this coupon number **DBR1** at the ordering stage and Bob's yer uncle.

Price: £29.99
Supplier: pulse-mx.com
Contact: 0845 257 5888



MSR 2012 RACEWEAR

There's pretty much something for everyone in MSR's 2012 range from the Metal Mulisha replica kit for freestyle fanatics to the Rockstar vented range for serious racers and it's all high quality shiz too – even the budget range is pretty damn tough! MSR's 2012 range is seriously epic and there's way more to it than we could ever show on this 'ere page so do y'sen a favour and head online to www.msrmx.com where you can see the lot in one place...

Price: Pants from £63.99
Jerseys from £21.99
Gloves from £14.99
Supplier: apico.co.uk
Contact: 01282 473190

JT RACING LONG-SLEEVE LIBERTY TEE

As well as bringing back the JT Racing brand to the UK, Decade Distribution are also fetching over the entire range of casual clothes which includes this badass long-sleeve Liberty tee which when you break it down makes no sense at all because a long sleeve tee looks nothing like a tee! Fools. Nice tee though, d'oh!

Price: £34.99
Supplier: decade-europe.com
Contact: 01792 469811

PRO TAPER SQUARE BAR PADS

Protect your face from those super-tough Pro Tapers and the clamps that hold them with this Square bar pad. Nuff said...

Price: £13.99
Supplier: apico.co.uk
Contact: 01282 473190



HYUNDAI HY3000SEI

If you need power wherever you go and you don't fancy building an Iron Man-esque arc reactor to power your pressure washer and kettle both at the same time then go ahead and treat yourself to this Hyundai HY3000SEI suitcase generator from long-term motocross supporters Molson. It's reasonably light, quiet and not too bulky which makes it ideal for weekends away in the camper or race truck...

Price: £742.80 + delivery
Supplier: molsongroup.co.uk
Contact: 01179 820123

WIZARD WASH DIRT BIKE CLEANER

Hurting out of Hampshire like a scalded hamster comes Wizard Wash – the UK's newest and greenest bike cleaner. Wizard Wash's biodegradable blend works a reet treat on dirt stains and scuffs – just leave it to soak for three minutes, agitate it slightly then rinse off. Good times.

Price: One litre bottle with trigger spray £5.95
Five litre refill bottle £12.95
Supplier: wizardwash.co.uk
Contact: 0845 519 7951

ANSWER

2012 RACEWEAR

For the past year the Answer team have been putting the finishing touches to their 2012 James Stewart, Alpha, Alpha Air, Rockstar, Skullcandy, Ion, WMX, Synchron and Mode collections making them even better than ever before. It wasn't easy but the 2012 line packs a new updated look that's sure to turn some heads which by my reckoning means it was definitely worth all the hard work. Check it out at a dealer near you!

Price: gloves from £24.99

Pants from £96.99

Shirts from £31.99

Supplier: apico.co.uk

Contact: 01282 473190



ONE INDUSTRIES

2012 HELMETS

Here are some stellar new skid lids from One Industries for the 2012 season. As you know One Ind have pumped out a plethora of pimped up helmets since launching them to the masses around 10 years or so ago and this latest batch is by no means any less badass!

Price: Gamma helmet £169.99

Atom youth helmet £69.99

Supplier: oneindustrieseurope.co.uk

Contact: 0844 692 8111



BARDAHL

RACING OILS

Once the most popular oil brand in America, Bardahl seemed to fall off the motorsports map but now it's back and back in the UK too thanks to BRP Imports. Bardahl products are pretty badass and although it's not all that easy to get excited about lubricants these are pretty special. We've been testing the XTC C60 4t oil and KGR Fuel Mix for two-poppers here at DBR towers and so far we're reet impressed. Check 'em out at your local dealer or give BRP a call...

Price: KGR premix £16.95

XTC C60 £13.95

Supplier: brpimports.com

Contact: 07973 962783



DC SHOE

SIGNATURE SHOES

When DC decided to chuck out new signature shoes for Nate Adams and Robbie Maddison – who are two of the illest freestylers around – they didn't pull any punches and created a pair of pairs that are out of this world, or sick to the power of rad as extreme mathematicians might say. The shoes, along with a whole heap more brand-new DC swag, are available to view right now, online at www.freestylextreme.com so steer your web browser there ASAPs, bro.

Price: see website

Supplier: freestylextreme.com

Contact: 0117 967 2240

KENNY

2012 RACEWEAR

This limited edition patriot kit from French clothing manufacturer Kenny is now available in the UK through BRP Imports. As used by the Suzuki GB Youth Team this Kenny kit is built to win and is guaranteed to help you stand out on the track. Check out the full range at www.kenny-racing.com then place your order with BRP – brraaaaapppp!

Price: Helmet £107

Patriot pants £159

Patriot jersey £54

Patriot goggles £34

Supplier: brpimports.com

Contact: 07973 962783



FOX RACING

2012 COVERT RACEWEAR

Fox reckon it's all about attitude which is why they're pushing the limits with their in-your-face-with-a-can-of-mace 2012 Covert series that features everything from helmets and racewear to a kit bag! The whole range definitely smacks of attitude and is available right now so hook yerself up like a crispy Peking duck. Booyah!

Price: V3 helmet £220 Covert glove £28

360 Covert pants £145 360 Covert jersey £45

Podium Covert bag £85

Supplier: foxeurope.com

Contact: 0191 487 6100



COMMENT OF THE MONTH

"WHY DON'T U.S. FANS RESPECT NON-U.S. RIDERS? LIKE REALLY, GIVE CREDIT WHEN IT'S DUE. CALL YOURSELVES MX FANS!"

Jordan Lilley – aka J-Lil – gets hot under the collar post MXdN and gets a great debate going. The 18-year-old firebrand from Derbyshire even rears up at a fellow member for her shameless attempt to pick up extra loyalty points! Well Jordan's just earned himself **5,000** of the bad boys and pair of **Etnies** into the bargain – good work angry Peak District teenager!



WIN!

CHATTER OF THE MONTH

'WILL BE DOING LOADS OF TRAINING OVER THE WINTER, BOTH ON AND OFF THE BIKE. I PLAN ON BEING ONE OF THE BEST IN THE BW CLASS FOR NEXT YEAR.' FIGHTING TALK FROM SCHOOLIE HOTSHOT DAVID KEET



WIN!

If your **dirtZone** post appears on this page you'll win a one-litre bottle of marvellous Muc-Off bike cleaner* – unless you live outside Britain in which case we'll send you some of Muc-Off's brilliant brushes and wipes instead...
*One bottle per member per month

SCOT UNDER THE COLLAR

I'm from Lockerbie in Scotland and have a big bone to pick with the FIM. As I am a Scot I am proud of my country and one of my many pet hates is when a Scot born and bred gets classed as a Brit.

This person is Dean Wilson. In the AMA he is always classed as a Scot and even has the 'Saltire' next to his name when the points table comes up. Why is it that the FIM call him a 'Brit' in the Motocross des Nations? I really want to get my point across and even more I hope the FIM see this as it gets mine and other people's backs up!

Sean Kevans, via dirtZone message to Dirt Bike Rider

Whoa, calm down Sean! We're sorry to have to tell you that Dean is indeed a 'Brit' as Britain (or Great Britain if you prefer) is made up of England, Wales and Scotland. So it's not the FIM's fault...

MX DES BRILLIANT!

Just back from a mad weekend in France and I'm still buzzing from the experience. I've never been abroad to watch motocross but I've been going to races in Britain for years so I thought it was about time I pulled my finger out and took the plunge.

So me and a couple of mates – plus my missus (she speaks French, see) – booked some cheap flights, hired a car and

had the weekend of our lives. I can't believe I've waited so long. The atmosphere was brilliant, the racing was brilliant, even the food was brilliant. Much better than the standard horse's handbrake and chips crap we're forced to eat back home.

Anyway, well done to all our lads (especially Ando) for riding their hearts out and, as much as it sticks in my throat, well done to the Americans too. The way they stayed cool and pulled it out of the bag at the very end was awesome.

Next year we'll be taking in some GPs and the MXdN at Lommel too. Does anyone know if they speak French in Belgium? If not then no need to pack the missus again!

Darlo Tony, via email

You certainly picked a good event to pop your continental MX cherry Darlo Tony! And, yes, they do indeed speak French in Belgium. Sorry...

CHEERY GREETING!

Hi DBR – glad to see you are in the office nice and early the same as me. An exciting day in Financial Services beckons. Would rather be out ripping it up on a track somewhere. Love this month's mag by the way...

Karl Steadman, via dirtZone message to Dirt Bike Rider

Tapping a keyboard or twisting a throttle? It's a bit of a no-brainer Karl...

MEMBER OF THE MONTH

The accolade of Member of the Month goes to 16-year-old **Connor Evans** from Hereford who's used dirtZone to get advice on – among other things – what petrol/oil ratio he should be running, the best ways to build up stamina and where should he get his name tattoo'd! Okay, so two out of three ain't bad and despite that last chatter question we've warmed to the young fella so he's going to be receiving some new Pirelli rubber for his 2000 RM125!



WIN!



PICTURE OF THE MONTH

Taken by top US snapper Ryne Swanberg at Pala in 2010, this shot of Flying Scot Dean Wilson pulling a heel-clicker is almost an optical illusion as his kit combines so at first glance it looks like he's got legs for arms and arms for legs. Especially appropriate that Katie Upton – dirtZone's queen of the no-footer – spotted this one! Skills Ms Upton!

NO

YES

POLL OF THE MONTH!

Instead of bombarding us with endless polls concerning our favourite chocolate bars, whether we prefer two-strokes or four-strokes or even which direction we prefer to wipe in, Ollie Hayward posed the simple but thought-provoking 'would you pay to do GPs even if you got lapped like three times every lap?' It wasn't the most popular poll but it gets our vote this month...

VIDEO OF THE MONTH

SEEING AS WE'RE ALL KNOCKING ON A BIT AT DBR TOWERS WE LOVE A BIT OF RETRO ACTION AND 14-YEAR-OLD BRADLEY STAFFORD FROM SHREWSBURY HAS HIT THE NAIL ON THE HEAD WITH A THREE-PARTER FROM THE 1984 BRITISH 500GP AT HAWKSTONE PARK. LAWLESS WAS ACTUALLY THERE THAT WEEKEND, WATCHING DT TAKE A PAIR OF WINS AND JOBE FAMOUSLY JUMPING THE DOUBLE WHILE HIS OLD MAN – THAT'S SEAN'S DAD, NOT GEORGES' – GOT LEGLESS ON BLACK TOWER WITH PETE EDMONDSON!



SAINT LUKE!

As well as catching up with the biking brainiac with the (almost) comedy surname you can look forward to a ton of other stories including SX reports from Sheffield and Vegas, what went down at Weston and some spiffing extreme enduro stuff to boot! I say, how rather splendid...

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MAKE A DATE!

**MORE TO SEE AND LESS TO PAY AT THE
INTERNATIONAL DIRT BIKE SHOW AT STONELEIGH PARK...**

Photos by Ray Archer

The gate's ready to drop on the 12th annual International Dirt Bike Show to be held at Stoneleigh Park from **November 3-6** and here at Dirt Bike Rider we're gearing up for the event with a host of special offers and on-stage activities all aimed at making this year's show the best yet.

If off-road is your passion then a visit to the UK's only show dedicated to all things dirty really is a no-brainer. What's more, the organisers have made it a far easier decision to make this year by slashing the admission costs so much that a family of four can get a whole day's dirt-biking fix for a tenner. More of that later...

Major off-road manufacturers KTM, Kawasaki, Husqvarna, Husaberg, CCM, Gas Gas and Montesa pledged their allegiance to the show early on in the year and will all use Stoneleigh as the venue to unveil their 2012 off-road machinery.

As we went to press, Suzuki confirmed that it too would be at the International Dirt Bike Show to reach its core target audience with its 2012 RM, RM-Z and DR-Z models and expects to

include some mouth-watering factory bikes in the mix.

Of course, the International Dirt Bike Show is about more than just metal – no matter how hot – and to this end the halls will be packed out with parts, accessories, clothing and plenty of bling for both rider and machine. O'Neal Europe, Fox Head Europe, Apico International, Madison, CI Sport, Putoline, Lazer, Michelin and Dunlop are among the hundreds of major brands that'll be on display.

Many visitors to the show aim to pick up a bargain or two and this year the choice will be wider than ever. While the popular retail area has reduced in size slightly to make way for a new Twinshock/Evo Classic display, there's a new dimension added to the event for those looking for a good deal as well as for those wishing to clear some garage space. Over the weekend halls one and three will lead through to a fully enclosed and covered 'Evoshock' Moto Jumble with free-of-charge entrance for show visitors.

Pitches are still on sale and the costs are minimal. The pitch itself is a basic floor-only site

and the organisers say goods sold must be restricted to parts, spares and hard accessories of the era up to and including the mid nineties. Strictly no modern-day or new kit like clothing, boots and helmets.

The main DBR stage in hall one is the place to find fun and games. We'll be putting on the challenge to find the king – or queen – of the console with regular PS3 play-offs. On the Saturday we'll present our DBR awards and hand over the BW85 dirtZone prize to one very lucky winner. There's a busy schedule planned for the stage throughout the four-day show with championship presentations and technical fashion shows. Legendary TV commentator and DBR contributor Jack Burnicle will oversee the stage and is sure to give champions of the past, present and future a good grilling.

Away from the hustle and bustle of the exhibition halls, for those in a competitive mood a Fast Eddy adult sprint enduro is planned for the weekend. This new adult event will be held on the 4x4 track in the woods, just a short walk away from the halls and Paul Edmondson and



© Surty



© Surty



© Surty



HAVE A GO!

TRY A BIKE ZONE

A new element for this year's event is the Try a Bike Zone, giving show-goers the chance to have some fun trying out new skills completely free-of-charge.

BUMPY (Birstall Urban Motorcycle Project for Youth) will be running its trials training taster sessions throughout the duration of the show where adults of 16 years and over can try their hand at a spot of trials riding on 125cc Gas Gas machinery. The 15-minute sessions will provide one-on-one tuition and, following this, participants will have the opportunity to try out their new skills on a manageable but testing course. All equipment will be provided and the only condition is for some previous riding experience.

For the youngsters quad riding has always been well received and this time there'll be no need for riders and their parents to worry about the weather as the fully-supervised kids' quad riding section will be completely under cover. Four-minute sessions will run every day for children aged six and over.

With the announcement that Suzuki is heading back to Stoneleigh comes the news that the Suzuki Off-Road Experience will be in full swing at the show. Using Suzuki DR-Z125 and DR-Z70 models, this is where novice riders can get a taste of what it's like to ride in the dirt. This is always a hugely popular activity and visitors are advised to book in early on the day to secure their session.

WIN! WIN! WIN!

TICKETS UP FOR GRABS...

Admission costs may be ultra-low this year but there's nothing like a freebie and we've got 10 pairs of tickets to give away, eligible for any day of the show.

To be in with a chance of winning all you need to tell us is the name of the legendary commentator who'll be taking charge of the DBR live stage this year.

- Is it:
- A: Jock Barnicle
 - B: Jack Burnicle
 - C: Jaques Bernacle
 - D: Paul 'Maler' Malin

Think you know the answer? Okay, point your PC at www.dirtbikerider.com (or scan this 'ere QR code with your smartphone), hook up to dirtZone and follow the competitions link, fill in the fields and hit transmit. Comp closes on **October 27**. All correct entries will go into Surty's special electronic hat – providing The Bear hasn't guzzled it – with the 10 winners chosen at random notified the following day.



his Fast Eddy team are working on the final arrangements now.

For visitors who like to be organised and book in advance, adult tickets will cost just £10 which represents a substantial saving of £5 over on-the-door prices.

Other ticket options such as youth, senior, child, student and family will be reduced accordingly. If those advance tickets are booked for the traditionally quieter opening day, a further 50 per cent discount will be applied as 'Thrifty Thursday' will offer half price admission to all visitors.

For an adult this means an entrance cost of just £5 with tickets booked in advance or £7.50 on-the-door to gain entry to Europe's largest – and the UK's only – dedicated off-road show.

Tickets can be bought by following the link on the show's website www.dirtbikeshow.co.uk or by calling the box office on 0844 581 0735. Advance ticket sales will close at 9pm on **October 31**.

For more information and latest show announcements visit www.dirtbikeshow.co.uk





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SEVEN UP!

TEAM USA MAKE IT SEVEN IN A ROW AS THE MX WORLD COMES TOGETHER ON ONE WEEKEND IN FRANCE FOR THE 65TH RUNNING OF THE MOTOCROSS DES NATIONS...

Words by Des Perrett Photos by Nuno Laranjeira



Out front and flying, Ryan Villopoto brings it on home for Team America

Once again the Americans dig deep to keep their mitts on the Chamberlain Trophy. And, once again, there's arguably a little bit of help from their friends who struggle to stay upright throughout the weekend...

Right, I'm going to start this run down of the 65th edition of the Motocross 'of' Nations with two personal opinions. **Opinion #1** – to me this event is the Motocross des Nations and without wanting to upset the powers that be too much I shall be calling it just that from here on in.

Opinion #2 – I think it's the best international sporting team event in the world.

Of course, I'm biased but I think it's better than the Olympics, the World Cup or anything else. It all happens over one weekend with all the countries thrown into the melting pot together and the heat is cranked right up so it's no wonder the pressure is high and sometimes it bubbles over the brim.

Although it's never official, the MXdN is where we get to find out who really is the fastest motocross racer on this spinning stone. For most of the year the forum debates rumble on arguing over who is the best of the best. The truth is we'll never really know for sure until there's a true world championship where the American elite race against the European-based GP regulars.

That's why the MXdN is the war of the worlds. Two very different racing cultures – Europe vs Uncle Sam – come together to wage war in one very universal sport and that's what makes it so bloody fantastic. When the American's dipped out in 2001 following 9/11 it just wasn't the same. Thankfully, America's best now rock up with an entourage that matches their rock n' roll star status in this event.

Talking of status, it's impossible not to realise the magnitude of the event about to happen when you arrive at the MXdN and the incredible St Jean d'Angely circuit certainly lives up to the expectation. Pant-filling downhill and horsepower-sapping uphill, rocky off-cambers and huge jumps – this is just about as French as French tracks get.

There's already a bristling vibrancy about the place before the hoards of men, women and children pack the hills with yet more colour like some huge painting by numbers picture. The place is buzzing, maybe more so because the French team have a very realistic chance of dethroning the mighty Americans.

That bubble of hope is deflated but not completely burst come Saturday evening after the qualifying races as the Americans romp it by topping all three classes. The so-called weak link in the team, MX2 rider Blake Baggett goes and grabs a wire-to-wire win in his first race outside the USA. In fact, it's the first time he's ever left his native country and he seems to be enjoying the experience and atmosphere of it all.

"So far it's been crazy," he tells me. "Crazier than I expected that's for sure. Tomorrow should be close to insane." Just to emphasise his point he's then swamped by fans as he makes his way back to his set-up.

Only his Monster Energy/Pro Circuit team-mate – and sworn enemy – Dean Wilson posts a faster lap time in their heat race. The Scot, who's nursing an at this point undiagnosed broken scaphoid after winning his first AMA crown at Pala, comes through to third after a mediocre start and really gives the thousands of British fans something to cling to for the big showdown on Sunday, as does Tommy Searle with a brilliant ride on the 450.

True British battler Brad Anderson certainly does his best too – as he always does. After coming together in the fast sweeping first turn with Jimmy Albertson who's representing Puerto Rico – read the American C Team – >>

French hero Gautier Paulin wins the second moto but luck isn't on the side of the home nation



British MX2 pilot Dean Wilson rides through the pain of a broken scaphoid



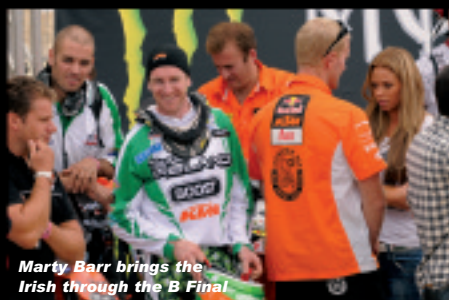
Ken Roczen thrills the crowd with his exploits against the bigger bikes



Christophe Pourcel's hopes – just like this fan's phone – are shattered when his mousse fails in the final moto



Les fan!



Marty Barr brings the Irish through the B Final



Blake Baggett under-performs – luckily for the Americans they've got the two Ryans to fall back on!



© Steve Cox

Steve Cox, right, makes the long journey from California to France

AN AMERICAN IDIOT ABROAD

OUR US EDITOR GETS THE INSIDE LINE ON HOW IT WENT DOWN FOR TEAM USA

By Steve Cox

It's never easy to head overseas to race. Ask any team in the GP paddock about heading to the USA for the MXdN in 2007 or 2010 and they'll tell you. Some teams have more support than others overseas, for sure, but for Team USA – and for the other AMA-based racers taking part in the Motocross des Nations – it's quite a feat to get prepared to race the MXdN.

Preparation starts over a month before the event. After the team is agreed the racers' regular teams prepare a motorcycle for shipment across the Atlantic along with plenty of spares. As mechanics typically don't do engine work for race teams in the USA anymore – they have engine specialists who handle such things – included in these spares are at least a couple of motors.

The only racer to come up a little bit injured before heading to France from the AMA side of the pond is Great Britain's Dean Wilson. Wilson went down in practice at Pala – the AMA season finale – and hurt his wrist but it didn't bother him all that much at Pala where he still went 1-1. However, he and his team flew to France the Monday after Pala and then shook down bikes on Wednesday and he realised things were bad.

"It just hurt a little at Pala but it wasn't bad," Wilson says. "I taped it up really good and it seemed okay. I figured it was just sprained. But I didn't really want to know for sure. When I rode for the first time in France, though, I knew it was going to be a long weekend. They wanted to x-ray it but I still didn't really want to know. I had to race so there was no point in me knowing for sure I had a broken wrist when I figured I probably did anyway."

After the teams head to France and shake down their race bikes early in the week most of the time is spent by racers, mechanics etc trying to gel as a team and adjust to being nine hours ahead of California.

"It's really important for everyone to hang out together," says Team Manager Roger De Coster. "They're rivals all year long so it's important that they spend time together and learn that, at least for this weekend, they're best friends. They have to learn to be team-mates, not rivals, for the weekend."

Teams and racers head to the track on Friday to walk the track and get situated, then return early Saturday to be a part of the drawing for gate picks for Saturday's qualifiers. Team USA got fifth gate pick behind four teams that are unlikely to be much of a factor in the overall – Czech Republic, Portugal, Greece and the Ukraine. The closest expected contenders are Italy with eighth pick, Belgium in ninth, France in 13th, Germany in 20th, Australia in 23rd, Great Britain in 24th and South Africa in 33rd.

On Saturday Team USA put in solid times in every practice session with Baggett posting the fastest MX2 times and Villopoto posting – by far – the fastest MX3 times while Dungey's times are third-fastest in MX1, about a quarter-of-a-second off of the fastest time set by France's Chris Pourcel with Italy's Antonio Cairoli slotted between the two.

Team USA also dominate the qualifying races but they know they still have a lot of work to do – although maybe they don't realise exactly how much work...

"We won, yeah, but none of us were really happy with how our bikes were working," says Dungey. "This track is really not what we're used to. We work all year long on perfecting our set-ups for AMA tracks then come here and it's all out the window." →

← So Team USA are the number one qualifier for Sunday's racing, getting the first and 21st gate pick in all three motos.

Because of the length of the start straight it's unlikely an MX2 machine can get a very good start even from the inside so most teams give their MX1 racers the first gate pick for the MX1/MX2 moto, including Team USA. It's better to have one team member get a good start than neither one if you put the MX2 guy on the inside. Before the first moto, De Coster meets with Dungey and Baggett separately to share this news and develop a plan for the moto.

I'll spare you a blow-by-blow account of the race – my Limey colleague Jeff Perrett's provided that – but I caught up with De Coster after the moto.

"Anything can happen in these races," he says. "Hopefully, that's the team's throwaway score [Baggett's 17th] but you just don't know in these conditions."

"It started raining and man it was just slick," says Baggett. "These guys are definitely used to this stuff. They've raced here before which, I mean, no excuses – we've all got to race the same track – but I just didn't get along with it that good. The first moto I crashed over the bars pretty big in the back. Luckily, I was fine. And then I just fought back from that."

The MX2 racers barely have time to do anything between moto one for MX1/MX2 and moto two for MX2/Open and after another tough – and disappointing – moto, Baggett's done for the day and he knows he's under-performed.

"I started 16th or 17th, made it to 10th and then Villopoto came around me and I just jumped in behind him," he says. "He got to fifth, and I got to seventh. I could still see him – I was just kind of using his lines – and then all of a sudden, just out of nowhere, the slipperiness caught me off-guard. I just went flying off the track and landed underneath one of their fences. It was a mess. I had to push it through the mechanics area and bump-started it. It was just a mess. I put my head down and I was kind of disappointed. I still hope we get this thing because I haven't really done much for Team USA."

Heading into the final moto Team USA trail by nine points behind France but once France throw away their worst score – 11th – and USA throw away one of Baggett's scores, the USA are only behind by three.

"We told Villopoto you're only three points behind," says Team USA's Mitch Payton. "When they calculated both of Baggett's finishes it looked like we were farther behind. So I'm like, if you guys go out there and kill it..."

De Coster decides with the two Ryans that Dungey should line up with first pick since Villopoto has good passing lines worked out from the previous moto and Dungey is technically racing the faster group of racers in the MX1 class. The math says that if Villopoto and Dungey get out front and go 1-2 in the final moto it doesn't matter where France or anyone else finish. And that's exactly what they do with RV slowing on the final lap so Dungey can join him as they cross the line.

"We had talked about it in the morning," Dungey says. "Actually it was kind of funny – Roger said 'wouldn't it be cool if you guys could ride across the finish together just like David Bailey and Rick Johnson' but the whole day was in front of us. I was wondering if Ryan was going to check up a little bit and wait for me and he did and we came across the line together. It's cool to celebrate that victory. I don't think we can be more happy."



RV's 3-1 card is decisive



Baggett leads into the first corner in his Saturday qualifier



British MX2 champ Arnaud Tonus does his bit for the Swiss



© Steve Cox



Ando fans show their true colours



Un très magnifique derrière!



BRITISH LION

BRAD ANDERSSON #12

"I rode like a fanny. It's so hard when you start from the outside, this track is so hard to pass. In the last moto Herlings rammed me, I lost a few places and my rhythm. Barragan passed me and then I started to get going again but I ran out of time. The first race I tensed up a bit, then Schiffer got by and then I crashed trying to get him back. After I came off I relaxed and rode better."

"The second moto I was up for it but it took me too many laps to find some good lines and it was hard to make up time. I was the back-up man and I tried my best on the day but I'm disappointed we never made the podium – for me, for the lads and the fans. Fourth again which pisses you off even more!"



Speedy Reedy wins the first moto for Team Oz



BRITISH LION

DEAN WILSON #11

*"I feel like I've let the team down a bit, even though I know I gave it my all. I tried my best with what I had. The track was s**t to be honest, maybe I feel like that because of my wrist and we've just missed the podium. When the rain came down it made it like ice in some spots but if I was 100 per cent I'd probably be saying the track is awesome."*

"The atmosphere was awesome though, this event is where it's at. I was obviously pissed that I crashed in the second moto. I had a rock knock my lens loose and I couldn't really see. Once I got my wheel the wrong side of the rut it was almost impossible to save it. It was my own mistake and it cost us and we're all bummed out on missing the podium after the start we had."

they both find themselves through the green mesh fencing and right at the back of the pack. After rip-roaring rides from the pair of them they came together again at the end of the race and an angry Albertson rides up alongside Brad and shouts "you should learn to brake"! Ando's instant response – "you should learn to shut off" – is classic Bradley.

The French riders don't appear to be too concerned by the dominance of the American team in qualification but then that's to be half-expected. Marvin Musquin (MX2), Gautier Paulin (Open) and the enigmatic Christophe Pourcel (MX1) are three of the coolest customers you'll ever meet. Pourcel in particular just seems to be testing the waters in his heat race and not exactly over-straining himself.

He puts in a couple of quick laps and then just seems to settle on third behind Ryan Dungey and Antonio Cairoli who go at it for the entire moto. It looks like it's going to be between these three for the MX1 race wins as they are a clear two seconds faster than the rest – of course, this is proved wrong the next day.

A sprinkling of overnight rain adds some extra spice to the big day making the track even more technical than before – not that this bothers the Irish team. Yet again they fail to make the cut into the main race via route one and find themselves in the B Final where only victory will earn them a pass into the points-payers. And yet again they rise to the occasion with Marty Barr winning in style, backed up by Stuey Edmonds on a borrowed factory TM and Richard Bird. The results prompts a wave of leprechauns who pour down the hill and storm the track to congratulate their heroes.

By the time the riders and mechanics start making their way through the sea of people to the startline for the first moto the sun has broken through but there are still a few dark clouds looming.

After the sighting lap and with the noise almost defending from the bank of partisan fans behind me I'm reduced to gawping open-mouthed as Cairoli's continued bad luck at this event strikes again and he goes down in the first corner – momentarily holding up Baggett and Wilson – while on the outside of the pack

Dutchman Herjan Brakke bails out in spectacular fashion. Only moments into the race and it's all going off.

At the sharp end Chad Reed has a flier and leads after the first lap with Bobryshev in second as Dungey tries to force his way through early to tag Reed. By lap five Dungey's into second and setting his sights on Reed, incredibly being pushed along by Ken Roczen who's the first of the MX2 racers by a country mile with his nearest 250F competitor Musquin down in 12th at this point. Baggett, who the day before claimed he'd had the best start of his life in his heat race, is wishing he'd saved that for this one and is way down in 24th at the end of lap one. Wilson isn't doing much better in 21st but to be fair the pair are both trying to ride the wheels off their Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasakis.

Searle's having another storming ride and holds Tyla Rattray at bay for the duration but Italian hopes literally take a dirt digger when Cairoli, pushing hard to cut through the field, throws it away at the top of the hill just after the start. The impact snaps the bar clamps on his factory KTM as well as the scaphoid bone in his wrist.

Pourcel seems to struggle to get in the groove and has his hands full with Rui Goncalves, Jon Barragan and Tanel Leok before he makes a mistake and hits his home turf. That disappointment is forgotten for a moment when Roczen slips past his soon-to-be KTM stable-mate Dungey into second and even starts to close down Reed. But the Aussie has it all under control though and steps it up for the win. Roczen holds on for second, Dungey's third and Searle's fourth. Wilson brings it home ninth just behind Musquin and in front of Pourcel but after slipping off again Baggett's back in 17th.

So with one down and two to go the big news is that Team GB are leading the world!

If the atmosphere for the start of the first moto didn't give you goosebumps the second certainly should as Gautier Paulin grabs the holeshot and the place goes nuts. That's immediately followed by a groan of disappointment when Jeffery Herlings, riding a 350, makes a move on Paulin for the lead that sticks and then his factory KTM





British Leyland made this bus!
Below: Leon hangs out with Ando



Deano ices his wrist back in the pits



The joys of camping!



J'adore le coq!

ON LES ROAD!

THREE DBR READERS HIT THE FRENCH HIGHWAYS FOR A WEEKEND OF BOOZE, BIKES AND BANGERS...

Words and photos by Leon Ward

Me and my pals Ian Tallock and Chris Mannell had been planning our Nations roadtrip for months – if ever there was a year that Team GB were in with a shout this was it and we were going to be there!

After months of constant phone calls from Chris – not just daily but many times a day – we were good to go but before I could hit the road south to meet up with my mates there was one very important task. When your better half agrees to let you go abroad for four days with a couple of mates while she stays home to look after the nipper you feel a certain obligation...

So on the Thursday morning after dropping our seven-year-old off at school I drove the 45 minutes to York to take the missus to her hair appointment, walked around for three hours, picked her up, told her she looked lovely and headed home to pack the car.

Then it was a five-hour drive down south to my dad's in West Sussex and early to bed so I was rested for the following day's marathon. I'm 27 but when it comes to MX I'm a massive kid so after a sleepless night I was pacing the house ready for my 8am pick-up. A full two hours late, Ian and Chris rocked up and we hit the road to Dover via Tesco where we stocked up on food and some alcohol called Crunk Juice which meant I was well on my way by the time I got on the ferry.

Two double JDs and a few vodkas later – punctuated by some out-of-window motorway puking – we arrived in St Jean d'Angely around 1am. By this point a hangover was kicking in but we pitched our tent and pretty soon realised we were camping in the middle of party central! Noisy doesn't come close – let's just say I was praying for them to seize but these guys obviously know how to maintain a chainsaw!

The next morning, after some BBQ'd sausages for brekkie, we headed to the track which looked absolutely mega. I couldn't get over how steep the hills were. I did come here to the Nations in 2000 but for some reason the track looked completely different.

We watched the first practice session and then headed to the pits and after lurking outside Ando's camper for 10 minutes he appeared and was an absolute pleasure, posing for photos and taking the time to speak to us. I've always been an Ando fan and he confirmed everything I thought of him. While we were there Deano appeared with his entourage consisting of his dad, the Scott goggle man, Jamie Dobb plus many, many more.

The first thing Deano did was ice his wrist and

straight away alarm bells were ringing. I'm a geek when it comes to motocross and knew all about his injury from the week before. But fair play, ever the gentleman he posed for a photo and again took the little time he had to speak to us.

I also waited outside Tommy's truck for a bit and even though I know he was in there he didn't appear. I know a lot of people feel he's arrogant but, personally, I feel that Tommy has to be in the zone and when he is you just don't see him – end of. But his mechanic was great and extremely accommodating. Seeing that I was trying to take a picture of Tommy's helmet he actually brought it over for us so I could get a close-up.

During the break we returned to the campsite and decided to get back on it! My head was still banging and the only solution was to start drinking again. A few vodkas and a Pot Noodle later we returned to the track for the qualifying racing with a rucksack full of booze. With drinks in hand we watched the racing and to my disappointment the USA totally dominated. The only saving graces were Cairoli chasing Dungey hard and Wilson finishing third which put to rest my doubts over his wrist. Oh and how reasonable the price of food and drink was – and, even better, it didn't go up on Sunday!

After qualifying seventh we went back to the campsite a little dejected but spirits soon lifted once we'd cranked up the barbie and cracked open more vodka! Later we headed around the campsite to soak up the atmosphere. There was a lot of alcohol-fuelled trouble that night – two mates of mine had to go to hospital and I honestly thought I saw a dead body in the medical centre – but it was no worse than a British GP!

Race day dawned and me and Ian were up bright and early but Chris, who'd stumbled into the tent just a few hours earlier and woke us both up, was dead to the world. The pecker had also left the front of the tent unzipped and after plenty of rain in the early morning all my warm, dry clothes plus the gas fire were p'ss-wet through. It was frikkin' freezing and all I had left was a t-shirt, shorts, the same pair of socks I'd been wearing for the last three days plus a thin top. I can't work out if I was still drunk or got away with no hangover but surprisingly I felt great and we had this fantastic family from Newcastle behind us who kindly took me in and let us cook some sausages to get our day going.

The track was packed with fans and the atmosphere was electric. For me the part I was most looking forward to was the final race of the day with Cairoli, Reed,

Searle, RV, RD plus Paulin all in one race. I'm not a believer in the USA vs the Rest of the World but I had a feeling this race would be the highlight.

Me and Ian managed to find a spot next to the track where we could hang over the fence but other than that we couldn't see the rest of the track. Luckily they had massive TV screens all around. Tommy and Deano did a fantastic job in the first moto – all of a sudden we were at the top of the table and my predictions of a podium or even a win were coming true.

Between the races we went to check on Chris but he was still passed out. We did the right thing by trying to wake him but he wasn't having it. This will be a Nations he will always remember!

For the second race we had a walk around and the French were in full volume. Paulin was amazing and so was Herlings. Watching them jump down that steep hill when you're stood next to it is unreal and it makes you realise just how slow you really are compared to these boys.

Our results didn't come in the second race so for us it was down to the final race which, again, was disappointing. Tommy rode the race of his life and Brad put in a fantastic effort but, although it hurts me to say this, he just didn't quite have the pace. So RV and RD dominated and we got another fourth. I was gutted but proud of our lads. We walked back to our tent by which time Chris was now up and packed away.

It took us over an hour to get out and a further eight hours later we reached Calais at 2am. You can imagine what state we were in. Half-dead from exhaustion I reflected on the weekend. Roczen was a stand-out for me then there were Tommy's great rides. Dean put in an awesome effort considering he was riding with a broken wrist and Chad was back to his winning ways. Oh and I'd eaten a lot of sausages!

On the 3am ferry Ian's snoring got so loud he attracted an audience so I moved so no-one knew I was with him! Once off the ferry it was two hours to my dad's and another two hours sleep in the car until he was awake so I could get in the house and say my goodbyes before another five hours back to Yorkshire.

It was great to see Chris and Ian – I hadn't seen them since 2008 – and probably won't now until Lommel next year. It was the biggest roadtrip I've done for motocross and not one I'll be looking to do again too shortly. On the plus side I reckon I won't be touching booze for a bit...



The Man! Roger De Coster has won the Nations as a rider and a Team Manager

MXdN HISTORY LESSON

1947 - 1967

The first Chamberlain Trophy was won in 1947 by a Great Britain team comprising Bill Nicholson, Fred Rist and Bob Ray with the racing held at the Haia track in the Netherlands. In fact, in the first 21 years Great Britain would go on to win the title 15 times as they became top dogs in world motocross.

Sweden won it four times, Belgium won it twice but the trophy wouldn't leave Britain for more than two years at a time with us even winning five in a row at the end of this period.

1968 - 1980

As motocross grew bigger on the continent it signalled the end of British domination. Russia – the USSR back then – broke our win-streak before Belgium really started to exert their dominance on the other countries. With riders like Roger De Coster, Joel Robert, Sylvain Geboers and André Malherbe they would take the trophy seven times in 13 years as the event started to grow into the massive event that it is now. Sweden had a few more wins, Russia would win it again in 1978 and Czechoslovakia even managed a win in 1975 on home territory.

1980 - 1993

However, in 1981 there was a real shift of power as the United States won their first ever event and a year later Danny 'Magoo' Chandler won both his motos as the USA made it two in a row. Victories in 1983, 1984 and 1985 extended their run to five and they'd go on to win the trophy 13 years straight as they really showed the rest of the world how to ride dirt bikes.

Combined with the inception of supercross, America had become the number one place to ride and with riders like David Bailey, Jeff Ward, Mike Kiedrowski, Rick Johnson, Jeff Stanton and many more it would take an almighty effort for them to be beaten.

1994 - 2004

But on a warm summer day in 1994, at the Roggenburg track in Switzerland, the American's win streak would come to an end as the unlikely trio of Rob Herring, Paul Malin and Kurt Nicoll shocked the world by beating a USA team consisting of Mike LaRocco, Kiedrowski and Jeff Emig. Herring was injured while both Malin and Nicoll were riding different bikes than they had all year so before the event nobody gave them a chance.

This result started another switch in power as the European nations fought back. Belgium would win it in 1995 with Stefan Everts enjoying his first MXdN victory and he'd also go on to lift the trophy in 1997 and in the Foxhill mud-fest of 1998.

Even Italy took home the trophy in 1999 as the Americans – including Ricky Carmichael – struggled in Brazil. Travis Pastrana was part of the American team which briefly held the crown at St Jean d'Angely in 2000 when he famously jumped over Stephane Roncada. However, France would take their first and only title in 2001 at the historic Belgian track of Namur when, due to tragic events in New York, an American team decided it wouldn't be a good decision to attend.

team-mate Roczen sails by too.

The Brits are faring well at this point. Wilson's looking good in 12th and Anderson's 16th and finding a good rhythm – then the wheels start to fall off Team GB's wagon. Wilson begins to look a little ragged and then throws it away on the split lane downhill when he gets his front wheel the wrong side of the rut and high-sides in spectacular fashion.

Villopoto crosses the line in ninth on the opening lap with Baggett just two places behind and following him until lap five when he bins it and drops to 36th. On the same lap Paulin, after dispatching Roczen, closes right in on Herlings and a lap later takes the lead which sends what feels like an electrical surge through the valley.

Musquin is also doing his bit, slowly picking off riders as he makes his way up to ninth on lap nine. But he topples over right in front of his adoring public in the deep ruts that claimed Searle the day before. He's soon up, back on the gas and frantically trying to sort out his front brake lever over the jumps but drops down three places that he won't get back.

I'm not sure if RV gets the message from his pit crew that Baggett's MIA but by the midway stage of the race he's certainly found his mojo and is taking chunks out of the riders in front of him as he posts lap times nearly three seconds quicker. First he picks off Kevin Stribos who's doing Belgium proud. Next up is Roczen who he slides underneath as they land side by side over the big uphill step-up.

As Villopoto goes through he washes out the

front end on the greasy surface and takes Ken to the fence and nearly puts the pair of them down. Roczen tries to hang with RV and his job is made easier as the American digs the front end into a rut before the gnarly downhill off-camber and the German moves ahead again.

But two laps later Villopoto is back past Kenny and rapidly closing on Herlings and Paulin. The Frenchman, prompted by the fans, knows that he's coming and puts in one final push while Herlings comes into range of Villopoto. In an incredibly exciting finish Paulin takes the win and is the obvious darling of the home crowd as he fist pumps over the finish line tabletop. Herlings just fends off RV's awesome late push for second even though he's been stuck in third gear for the best part of the race and Ryan can't hide his frustration.

The contrast between the French and US camps in the post-race interviews is clear. Paulin's welled up with the emotion of what he's just achieved while a grim-faced Villopoto admits he gave it all he could and that team USA will need a gift if they are going to win seven straight MXdNs. With the French leading the USA by nine points going into the final moto excitement and anxiety fill the air, especially as the Americans are rolling out their big guns – the two Ryans – to do battle. Belgium are third, Germany fourth and Team GB have dropped from first to fifth. But we know the pendulum of fate could swing back and we could still find ourselves on the box.

Russian Evgeny Bobryshev emerges like >>



© Steve Cox

Brett Metcalfe and the Aussies just pip the Brits to a podium finish



© Steve Cox

Ryan Dungey claims his third MXdN win on the trot



The French fans go mad after Paulin's race two win

← The following year was the 'Competition Park' disaster which was eventually rescheduled for Bellpuig in Spain when the American track pulled out but thankfully a year later the event was back to being the pinnacle of the sport as the public finally got to witness Everts vs Carmichael in the same class. While Carmichael won the individual battle, Everts and Belgium won the war in what was a great moment as the King of Belgium presented the trophy on their home soil of Zolder.

Controversy once again reigned in 2004 as Team USA pulled out of the Lierop race. Numerous reasons were given for their lack of participation with bike-testing, funding and general lack of interest all mentioned but that allowed Belgium to be crowned champions for the 14th time.

2005 - 2011

The Americans were back in 2005 as Ricky Carmichael inspired them in front of a massive crowd at the Ernée track in France. His moto wins saw the USA take the victory ahead of the home nation with Everts and Belgium a disappointing third.

Everts was back to his best a year later at Matterley Basin in England, defeating James Stewart in the MX1 class in both his motos to sign off what was an incredible career. His 1-1 wasn't quite enough though as Villopoto and Tedesco did enough to take the win with Villopoto taking the MX2 award ahead of rival Antonio Cairoli, despite the Italian's amazing ride when he won the second race.

The following year saw the return of the MXdN to America after a 20-year absence. Budds Creek was the venue in what was one of the best events in recent memory. The Americans and in particular Ryan Villopoto put on a clinic to win the trophy with a near-perfect total score of eight. Despite being on a 250F, Villopoto won both his motos by massive margins as the USA dominated the rest of the world.

A late venue change saw Donington Park host the 2008 MXdN. Once again Stewart failed to win his individual class as it came down to Tim Ferry and Ryan Villopoto to see the USA home. Bad luck struck the French though as Boissiere suffered a puncture while running in second, dropping him 16 places and handing the title to the Americans.

In 2009 Italy hosted the race at the Franciacorta track. Hopes were high for the home nation going into the third race as the Americans were struggling. France, Britain, Australia and Belgium were also hoping to break the USA win-streak but all those hopes were dashed within the first three turns as Cairoli, MacKenzie, Reed, Paulin and Desalle all went down. This left Ryan Dungey to take the race win and lead the celebrations with team-mates Ivan Tedesco and Jake Weimer.

It was back to America in 2010 as Thunder Valley held the event. Dungey was once again the leader and together with Trey Canard and Andrew Short they won number six in a row. Which brings us to 2011 where despite being under immense pressure Dungey, Baggett and Villopoto did enough to hold off the French when tyre problems once again ruined any chances they had of winning it in front of their home fans.

David Bulmer

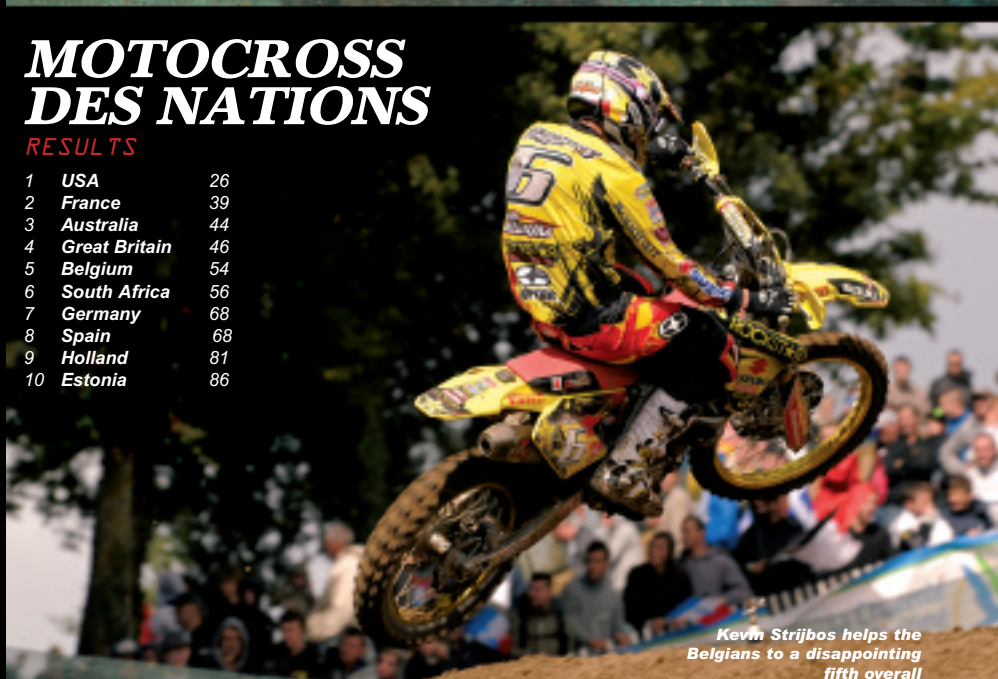


Man love!

MOTOCROSS DES NATIONS

RESULTS

1	USA	26
2	France	39
3	Australia	44
4	Great Britain	46
5	Belgium	54
6	South Africa	56
7	Germany	68
8	Spain	68
9	Holland	81
10	Estonia	86



Kevin Stribos helps the Belgians to a disappointing fifth overall



French MX2 rider
Marvin Musquin



The strain of two hard motos
shows on Speedy Reedy's face



RV OK!

some Cold War villain to get the holeshot in the decisive final moto but Villopoto, who's taken the outside pick on the line for the Yanks, makes up for his poor start in the previous moto with a killer jump this time and soon rails past Bobby. But the big Russian won't go down without a fight (think Ivan Drago here) and retakes the lead when Ryan drops his guard and his bike in the tight right-hander after the whoops at the top of the circuit.

All this seems to do is rattle Villopoto's cage even more and he puts a super-aggressive move up the inside of Bobby into the first corner past the pit lane. It's the closest anyone will get to RV right up until he crosses the line.

With his team-mate going off into the distance Dungey appears to be trapped on the ropes with Pourcel throwing everything he has at him and it looks like the title fight is going the distance. Pourcel's flowing around the circuit like he's on rails and makes a slick move on Dungey that cranks the decibel level up to ear-bleeding! But no sooner has Pourcel gone past he's rolling off the side of the track as the mousse from his rear tyre slides off the rim, taking with it French hopes of an epic home win.

Australia are now the biggest threat to France in the podium battle and the Brits are coming too. With five minutes to go it really is too close to call. Searle is flying and Paulin looks to be feeling the effects of too much emotion as he falls back after a race-long duel with Italy's sole surviving rider Davide Guarneri.

Reed – who'd hit the ground in the same corner that claimed Searle and Musquin – and team-mate Metcalfe look more assured as the race wears on, making the French crowd even more anxious. With Dungey now comfortably in second and RV even further down the track it's laps 15 and 16 that turn out to be the final acts of this drama.

Tommy Gun goes past Reed and Guarneri in tail-end traffic – making them look like lappers too – and 30 seconds later Metcalfe bins it and Team GB suddenly smell blood but Tommy has an impossible mountain to climb to catch third-placed Rattray. So it falls on Ando, who's been sandwiched between Tonus and Barragan for the best part of the race, to get past the Swiss rider and the Spaniard who worked his way by on lap 14.

The ray of hope for Britain brightens a little on the final lap when Bobby goes past Reedy but to those that have worked out the maths it's not enough. It's tight enough to confuse the Aussie and Brit riders as all four aren't sure who's finished on the final step of the podium until the Australian pair are directed to the steps by Youthstream staff.

No such problem for the American duo though – they know they've got it the bag long before they've even crossed the line and all they have to do is bring it home which they do side by side as Villopoto slows on the last lap to make sure he crosses the line with Dungey just like Rick Johnson and David Bailey did at Maggiora back in 1986.

The Americans were on some win streak back then – just like now – and it's hard not to applaud and acknowledge that fact because they always seem to close the deal out. That old adage about how you make your own luck certainly seems to ring true with them, especially over the past few years and hats off to them for it.

So once again all the other nations are left licking their wounds for another 12 months and thinking of what could've been while the forum debates just keep rolling. I don't think that will ever change – no matter who wins the MXdN – but isn't it great? This perpetual war of worlds in a sport where pride is all that really matters. |

BRITISH LION

TOMMY SEARLE #10

"We're disappointed – it's hard not to be after how we started. At the end of the day it's a team event and it takes a lot of luck and unfortunately we had a couple of crashes. I think we all rode our hearts out and that's all we can ask. On a personal note I don't think I could've done any more than I did. I passed a lot of guys today. Not because I got bad starts, I got good ones and had bad luck.

"I got T-boned in my second moto and was way down after that. Then when I was coming through I got a rock on the nose and I thought it might be broken, there was blood everywhere. I even thought about pulling in it was that bad but I'm glad I didn't because I was one of the fastest riders on the track. I didn't know how well I'd do on the 450 and it gives me a lot to look forward to."





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FROM THE EUROPEAN LAUNCH OF THE KX450F,
ED BRADLEY GIVES US A SECOND OPINION
ON THE BIG FO-FIDDY AND ENJOYS A
UK FIRST TEST OF THE 2012 KX250F...

Words by Ed Bradley

Kawasaki have put some serious thought into their 2012 250F and the result is a bike that hauls right the way through the range



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Ed prepares to test out the Showa forks at FatCat

The 'sturdy' feel inspires confidence in the 250F's handling



For 2012 there's a definite factory look to the two-fiddy



My preparation for testing the 2012 Kawasakis had gone well after spending the previous day training with Gert Krestinov around the sandy, bumpy practice track at FatCat Moto Parc on my '09 KX450F.

Following a good night's sleep, a 50-minute run – again with Gert – in the morning was a very enthusiastic start to the day and as we arrived at FatCat the sun was out, the track was graded as smooth as a baby's bum and there were a handful of gleaming KXFs being pulled out of the LPE Kawasaki team truck and heading out to the track to be run in.

At this point I was feeling a little subdued. What are the differences between the 2011 and the 2012 KX250F? After all, most bikes for next year have had very little updates – if any! What would there be to say about these bikes we were going to test? But it was great to meet and chat with all the LPE guys as the static photos were being taken and Ross Burridge gave me the lowdown on the little ripper – it turns out there is more to the 250F than meets the eye.

The first thing I noticed were the trick little anodized blue components such as the timing

covers on the casings and oil filler cap along with the slightly changed decals. The rest of the changes are just about all on the inside. The rear shock has had refinements made to its dual compression adjusters and the forks have had updates too. But the big changes for the 2012 machine come in the motor...

You can still alter the ignition mapping and you can even use data logging to record engine performance which is handy for future reference and feedback for different tracks so you know what the best engine set-up is for you on certain tracks. The factory style bridge bottom piston remains sat in the pot ready to shoot down the bore after the strong explosions of fuel from the dual injector set up! This little piston is going to get no rest at all because for the strong grunt of the bottom-end power the motor is being fed fuel from the down-stream injector and when the throttle is wide open, the up-stream injector is used to produce strong top-end power.

As you would expect, the system is clever enough to produce smooth power as it transfers from one injector to the other whether you crack the throttle open quickly or roll the throttle on as you pick up speed around turns.

So what better place to test out the motor than a freshly graded sand track with long flat straights and deep, soft corners? The freshly run-in motor was going to get a very good thrashing! Well, it would be rude not to – after all, I'm sure you'd want to know that I gave it my all!

With a quick Superman style change into my kit and with only one kick to get the little ripper started I was on the track ready to use all my lines which were dialled only the day before.

There's no need to say anything about the brakes. They're the same as last year, work the same and feel just as you would expect them to – plus the fact that the soft sand slowed the bike down so there was no need for serious braking.

The lay-out of the bike still feels good. The wide seat/tank junction gives you that safe, sturdy but slightly heavy feel although the bike is a light 250F. This safe and sturdy feel allows rider confidence as the bike tracks through turns and berms really well. And there's no cutting in or being forced over the top of the sandy berms which is a credit to the suspension.

Straight from the off the suspension worked really well on the wave sections, jumps and as the braking bumps developed there was





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no harsh feeling in the forks – just a smooth, plush action which worked great with the shock and felt well balanced on each section of the track. I felt quick on this bike straight away.

The feeling of speed was made easier by the performance of the motor and I had a cunning plan to test it out. To test the bottom-end pull I would drive it like my big Massey Ferguson tractor at DMP and ride it slowly into the tightest, softest turn on the track in a high gear – I used third – with no clutch and see how the motor would respond. To test the top-end power I would then choose the longest, flattest straight on the track, stick it in one gear and leave it for the whole straight wide open – something I wouldn't dare do this on my own bike, yet alone a brand spanking new one that's only just been run-in.

I had chosen my two points and tested the bike to the extreme for a number of laps. The bottom-end, low-down pull is great. The first time into the turn I went in fast and the motor was really strong and crisp and picked up rapidly leaving the turn behind me in a short space of time. As I slowed my pace down I entered the turn no quicker than a complete beginner, turned

the throttle and with no clutch the motor picked up really well. There was no chug, chug, chugging – just a deep note and rather fast acceleration. Yep, the bottom-end power on this bike is awesome for both racers and hobby riders.

The performance of the top-end power was just as exciting. Coming out of a fairly fast, third-gear right-hander where I'd normally – on a 250F – expect to hook two more gears on the following straight, I purposefully only shifted up once and to my surprise the motor stayed strong for the extra 25 metres or so after I should have changed up again. When the bike reached its peak power there was no dip or drop, the bike carried on at the same speed and I struggled to tell if the rev limiter was on!

Overall, I had a blast on this bike. It's safe and predictable, well-balanced and stable with a really strong motor that's smooth and crisp. Myself and the other riders testing the 2012 Kwacks enjoyed riding the bikes so much we used over 100 litres of fuel! Well, we did get to test the new 450F as well...

Moving seamlessly along, the 450 has had

some major improvements which transform the bike's performance – improvements I hope to see handed down to the 250F in 2013.

You only have to sit on the 450F to get the feeling that this bike is made for performance and actually feels like a modern racing bike due to the frame being 12mm thinner and the seat being flatter as well as harder. Instead of the bike being wider – giving you that safe, sturdy feeling like on the 250F – the 450 is more pencil-thin giving a light, nimble feel to it and that's before you've taken it off the stand!

And there is plenty you can do with this bike before you take it off the stand. For example, the handlebars have two positions in the top clamp which is cool for two reasons – one because rather than having to remove the handlebars and twist the clamps round 180 degrees (I think you can still do this and it's only a small adjustment) you can just undo the nuts underneath the clamps and move them backward or forward as you choose. Secondly, because there are two sets of holes the bike will be a tad lighter!

And there's more! You can now even choose between two heights on the footrests >>



The 450F can be tailored to suit the rider's requirements



Specifications

KX250F

Capacity: 249cc

Bore and stroke: 77mm X 53.6mm

Transmission: Five-speed

Fuel tank capacity: 7.2 litres

Front suspension: 47mm USD
Showa (315mm travel)

Rear suspension: Uni-Trak
(300mm travel)

Front brake: 250mm disc

Rear brake: 240mm disc

Seat height: 945mm

Wheelbase: 1,475mm

Ground clearance: 330mm

Kerb weight: 106.2kg

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SECOND Opinion

TOOFAST MAX IN THE MIX...

By Max 'TooFast' Hind

In the words of the great Dungey I was 'super-pumped' when I got the email from Sean 'Baron Bullsh*t' Lawless inviting TooFast Films to our very first UK press launch for a shiny new dirt scooter!

I didn't really know what to expect, this being our very first UK press launch for a shiny new dirt scooter n'all – the only thing I knew would be involved was a van full of mean, green machines and a couple of LPE lorries. The rest was a mystery...

We arrived at the power-sapping FatCat Motoparc which was groomed and prepared to perfection. I realised not only did I have to learn my way around a marque that I haven't ridden since the old 65 days, I also had to remember how to ride a four-banger! Add to that teaching myself how to ride in the deep sand of FatCat and I had a lot on my plate!

It was pretty surreal to be honest, sitting in the hospitality area of the LPE Kawasaki tent, sipping an ice-cold coffee Monster Energy with a load of blokes I recognised from the TV. There was even one of those UFC 'ardmen knocking about!

Finally, after an age of waiting, after everyone had taken their static shots of the brand spanking new bikes, after all the anticipation, it was finally time to get my ass on board one of the 2012 KX 250Fs and onto the track!

Right from the off there were a couple of things that stuck out about the bike – namely how easy it was to ride and how light it felt! I myself ride a 125 and don't have too much four-stroke experience so I was really surprised and relieved when I threw my leg over the bike and immediately felt comfortable. After laying down some laps my initial thoughts about the KX250F were solidified. And it wasn't only me! My brother TooFast J, who does have plenty of four-stroke experience, also immediately felt comfortable on the Kawasaki!

I started to gel with the Kawasaki very quickly and felt as though I had tamed the beast. It was easy to keep under control even in the deep sand which is a massive positive! Looking at this bike from a youth perspective the combined qualities of its weight and controllable power make this a great bike for young riders moving up from 85s and 150s.

I know that many riders and MX dads are nervous about moving out of the youth ranks and onto full-sized machines – especially four-bangers. It's a tough one – on one hand you're worried the power and weight might be too much for you, on the other you still want to be competitive in big races which in this day and age means you most likely need a four-banger. So what to do?

Well I reckon Kawasaki's new 250F may be the answer. Even with my inexperience in sand and my inexperience on a 250 four-stroke, even I could tame the green beast! And having just graduated into the full size classes myself I think this bike could be the one for youth riders!

For our video report check out the videos section on www.dirtbikerider.com or scan the QR code on this page...



The 450 is slim and has a nimble feel to it



with a difference of 5mm. I remember reading an article where Thorpey had been setting up his HRC factory Honda in Japan and he commented that they had been testing frames and had got the footpeg height right. It's taken quite a long time for that option to come through to a production machine!

And there's even more! You can alter the map settings on the ignition just by changing a small plug. How easy is that? All you need to do is make sure you keep the plugs in a safe place and remember which colour is which setting.

As an optional extra you can get a shorter rear linkage arm which reduces the overall seat height – great for the Ricky Carmichaels out there.

So if you like choice and testing different options this bike is right for you. If, on the other hand, you are like me then you'll just want to get on it and have a good blast – which is what I did.

I love the feel of this bike. It is moving more toward the slim feeling of the Hondas and it's easy to put the bike where you like, even in the deep sand. I did notice a big difference with the motor however. The difference being that it's quite a revvy motor. The power comes in well, goes past the bottom-end quite easily and loves to hover around the mid to top-end while churning out plenty of power which I think makes the bike more rideable for hobby/club racers rather than offering a bucketful of bottom-end that could get you in to a whole heap of trouble.

The new launch control, however, nearly got me into a whole heap of trouble! When testing it the first time the front wheel came up as soon as I dropped the clutch so you still have to sit over the front! So I returned to the beginning of the short straight I was using and did another start, this time in a normal starting position. The front end stayed down and I was thinking 'okay, this just feels like normal so I'll hook third now' and a moment later I was squeezing the brakes as hard as I could to stop me leaving the track!

I'm impressed with the new 2012 Kawasakis and that Kawasaki have made some fundamental changes to the 250F and the 450F – I'm sure they will be rewarded for their efforts.

A SLASH OF SUNLIGHT
SEARS JACKY VIMOND
AS HE SWEEPS UNDER
THE FOOTBRIDGE, NANNUR,
1988



LJUNGQVIST SOARS
TO SECONDS IN THE
1988 GERMAN 300 GP
AT NORTHEIM



HISTORY REPEATS!

THE NEWS THAT YAMAHA ARE PULLING OUT OF WSB HASN'T
SURPRISED OUR RESIDENT MOTOCROSS HISTORIAN, HE'S SEEN
IT ALL BEFORE IN THE OFF-ROAD WORLD...

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle

The road racing world was recently rocked by the unexpected news that Yamaha were quitting world superbikes. Mid-season, still challenging for race wins and the manufacturers' title but devoid of a headline sponsor, Yamaha Europe announced that the plug would be pulled at the end of the season. I wasn't overly surprised. We in the motocross world have experienced similar treatment from the Japanese keyboard giant in the past!

The Hamamatsu factory originally entered competition in 1955 with their first production motorcycle – the 125cc two-stroke YA1 'Red Dragonfly'. The event was the fabled 'Mount Fuji Ascent Race', a 15-mile, 4,500ft hill-climb up the side of Japan's highest mountain, a volcano 60 miles south west of Tokyo. It took Teruo Okada 29 minutes and seven seconds to win the 125 class, beating 49 rivals mounted on 16 different makes of machinery! Three years later 19-year-old Fumio Ito travelled to America to contest the 1958 Catalina Grand Prix – a cross-country race held on Catalina Island off the Pacific Coast of Southern California which was revived by Red Bull just last year!

Sixth place stimulated the establishment of a racing development department in 1959 and by 1961 Yamaha were ready to tackle 250GP road racing. Ito eventually won the 250cc race at Daytona International Speedway early in 1963 and became the first Yamaha winner of a world championship round, triumphant in the Belgian 250 Grand Prix at Spa Francorchamps.

In 1964 Phil Read signed up and rode the 250 RD56 to its first world title, conquering five grands prix along the way. The Englishman would win again in 1965, then do the 125 and 250 double in 1968

before claiming a fourth 250 world crown for Yamaha in 1971. And two years later they won their first off-road world title when elegant Swede Hakan Andersson topped the 1973 250cc MX series, deposing Suzuki's Joel Robert.

In 1977 and '78 Finnish maestro Heikki Mikkola beat Roger De Coster (Suzuki) and Brad Lackey (Honda) to win successive 500 world championships. Then Anglo-American duo Neil Hudson and Danny LaPorte claimed back-to-back 250 titles in 1981 and '82 before Jacky Vimond was crowned first French world champion in 1986.

But by then the air-cooled YZ490 was outmoded and struggling. Heroic Hakan Carlqvist had out-muscled Honda's factory squad to the 500 title in 1983 but by '86 Carla and team-mate Leif Persson were being roundly beaten not only by Big Red but also by Kawasaki and KTM. Leif did win a moto at his home round in Vimmerby – he always was mustard in sand! – and he and Carlqvist shared second places at Sittendorf in Austria but eventually Leif and his distinguished mentor were only sixth and eighth respectively in the final tally. It was time for action in Japan.

So 1987 saw the launch of Yamaha's brand new water-cooled YZM500 with beautifully crafted aluminium frame. Unfortunately, they also chose to sack Carlqvist who won them 13 GPs in seven tempestuous seasons. Mistake!

Although their YZM500 made a glorious debut in French Sonauto blue, winning February's Le Touquet beach race in the hands of an exhausted Persson, Leif had broken a hand before the first grand prix in Spain. Their other appointed rider, Vimond, had been dropped 25 feet onto the floor of a Parisian night club when a celebration of his 250 world title went tragically wrong. His back broken,



was armed with his mum's Kodak Brownie camera. After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer, magazine art director, photographer and part-time art college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism. Now he's a commentator, painting pictures with words. He never did get a proper job...

JACK BURNICLE is the godfather (our words, not his) of British MX journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to Bella and nutty (his words, not ours) musical genius Stan Burnicle, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid. At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local 'scramble' and was instantly, hopelessly hooked. Next time he went he

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Signature du titulaire
Usual signature of wife
Signature de la femme
(S.373715)

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Place of birth	BILLINGHAM			
Lieu de naissance				
Date of birth	9/3/47			
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THE BEST IN THE EYES OF A CHAMPION

ANTONIO CAIROLI
MX1 GP WORLD CHAMPION

Antonio Cairoli
#222



Jacky miraculously recovered in time to try and race that opening 500GP at Yunqueira but suffered horribly in deep, cloying mud. Far from health and fitness, Vimond wisely pulled out for most of the season.

Yamaha's great new Honda-beater looked suddenly rudderless and, to rub salt in the gaping wound, Carlqvist rode a private Kawasaki to second overall behind winner Dave Thorpe.

Smiling Finnish privateer Kurt Lungqvist was hurriedly hired as Yamaha's sole representative and scored a couple of eighth places in France behind Thorpe and first race winner Carlqvist! The latter did it again, winning race one in Austria before a second-race puncture caused a crash and severe elbow injury. Lungqvist improved to fifth in that moto and followed it up with the YZM's maiden race win in his home round at Ruskeasanta, outside Helsinki.

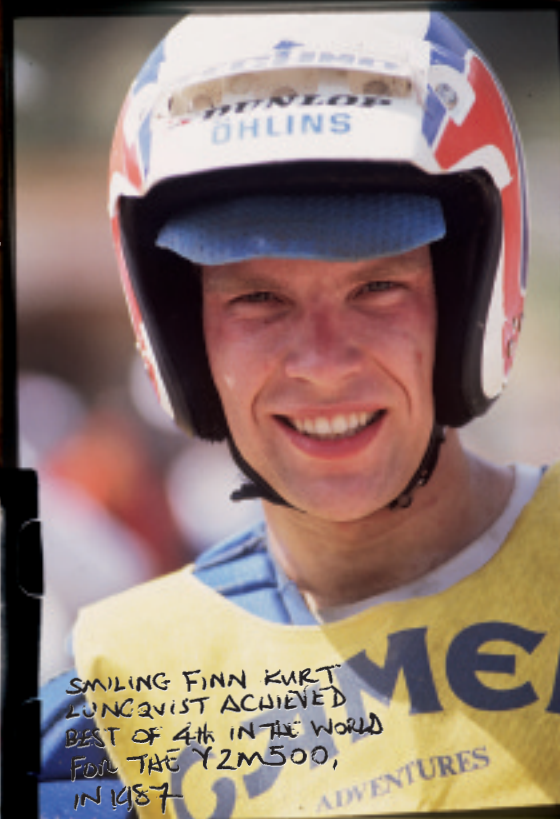
Persson, meanwhile, had returned to the fray and he topped off Yamaha's Scandinavian tour with a second moto win in Sweden. Lungqvist – a modest, easy-going but determined man – achieved a series of third places in Sweden, Germany, Holland and Luxembourg to end the year a fine fourth in the 500GP championship behind a Honda, a Kawasaki – and a KTM! Persson recovered to reach sixth and Vimond returned with a sparkling third place ride in the final moto of the year at Roggenburg in Switzerland before

joining myself and guest pilot Roger Harvey at a magazine test for DBR.

We convened outside Marseilles and joined Yamaha boss Lin Jarvis, factory mechanic Bo Myrbrinck and Vimond at a sumptuous restaurant before spending the next day at La Fare les Oliviers between Marseilles and Avignon. A classic fast, hard-pack French track, it allowed ex-125 national champ and Mitsui Yamaha veteran Harvey to enjoy his first ever 'works' ride to the full! He discovered a huge spread of power and mighty bottom end – "not where Yamaha's big-bore bikes have been strong in the past" – but it was the plush Ohlins suspension, plus that revolutionary chassis, that really impacted.

"It's all aluminium with the rear sub-frame doubling up as the airbox. Three bolts, one clamp and the whole lot is removed. Everything, including the swingarm, is hand-made with suspension links machined from a solid block of aluminium. The only disappointment is production steel screws, not titanium – handy, I suppose, when you're striving to reach the FIM minimum weight limit!"

Vimond put in some dazzling laps that afternoon and, restored to as near full fitness as he'd ever be, the Frenchman's 1988 season went from bad to good with a bang! After failure in Austria he led the opening moto in Switzerland until being devoured by Thorpe on the final lap and finished the day at Payerne third overall. He followed that up with the



LEIF PERSSON WRESTLED HIS WAY TO SIXTH IN THE WORLD IN 1987

SMILING FINN KURT LUNGVIST ACHIEVED BEST OF 4TH IN THE WORLD FOR THE YZM500, IN 1987



YZM's first and ultimately only grand prix victory at Limhamn in Sweden to move fourth in the table behind the factory Hondas and Kurt Nicoll's Kawasaki.

Team-mate Lungqvist – Persson had been dropped – came good again with third overall in Finland where Vimond emerged pointless. One rider loved sand, the other didn't! Second to Eric Geboers in the first soggy moto in Germany, Lungqvist put together a solid season to finish sixth in the series. Vimond, meantime, rose to rostrum brilliance in Italy (the YZM's last race win), Hollister Hills in northern California, the Republic of San Marino and Luxembourg but with lingering back problems he struggled round rough sandy fortresses like Lichtenvoorde and Hawkstone Park. A brave fifth in the world championship, he still finished adrift of Honda, Kawasaki – and KTM!

Four grand prix moto victories – three of them in Scandinavia where it also scored its solitary overall success – and numerous podium appearances looked a decent platform for the YZM to launch a world championship assault in 1989 but it wasn't enough to satisfy Yamaha's top brass. They pronounced that 500cc MXGPs were dead! They were withdrawing factory involvement, their precious YZMs were to be trashed and they would shift their focus on to 250s. And yet...

Nine years later Yamaha were back with a 400cc four-stroke. Andrea Bartolini and Peter Johansson would finish fifth and sixth behind Husaberg, Husqvarna – and KTM! And our sport would never be the same again...

BIGGER. FASTER. STRONGER...

**AFTER BEATING IT TO BITS OUR DEPUTY DAWGER
FINDS WAYS OF BEEFING UP HIS BELOVED RMX450Z...**

Words and photos by **Sutty**

While dirt bikes are designed to take some serious abuse they're not completely immune to being beaten like a dancing bear as I know all too well after trashing the RMX on several occasions this year...

Okay, so the first time really wasn't my fault and the Suzuki suffered at the hands of our crayon-eating, mag-designing fool we call Das Bear – he's got a Bavarian flavour to him this month to honour Ken Roczen winning the world title for das fatherland – but since then all the damage has actually been my fault. It's not like I go out to do these things on purpose but accidents do happen and things do get broken – plastics, throttle tubes, radiators, handlebars, grips, hearts, kankles, s**t like that.

If you tuned in last month you'll already know I stuffed the Suzuki into a big round bale of rape as I battled over seventh place in a semi at the Tir Prince half mile. At the time I was in so much pain I just loaded up the Vivaro and came home without surveying the damage but a few weeks on I knew the time had come to hose off the shale, lime, sand and horse p**s mix and start straightening out my weapon.

For starters it was very obvious that I'd broken the right radiator shroud and bent the radiator itself backwards too which along with my other dirty discrepancies meant I now had a matching pair of twisted water coolers and broken scoops. Oops! Aside from that a trashed throttle tube and grips were the only other bits that would need attention before I planned to hit the floor once more.

Starting at the top the throttle tube was a no-brainer. After seeing Pulse Racing's adverts for their all-new Roll-X throttles I knew I had to have one because you know that if a company has gone to the trouble of etching motivational messages on a hidden part of their product you know they won't have cut corners anywhere else. And they haven't, this throttle tube is intelligently designed and astonishingly well engineered and costs less than 30 bones (DBR readers even get a free pair of grip donuts and 10 per cent off all future orders when buying direct from pulse-mx.com with the DBR1 discount code).

Obviously tougher than the standard plastic part, the things that set this throttle tube apart from the rest are the bar-end bearing and inner polymer bush which not only eliminate all tube/handlebar friction but also act as a barrier which stops all dirt, dust and debris from getting into the gubbins which more or less makes it maintenance free. Good times. Time will definitely tell on that one but I can't see why it shouldn't be the case – we'll keep you posted.

After several big highsides, a lowside, one loopout and various other what-the-fudge-happened-there? style get-offs it's amazing that the radiators are even attached to the RMX let alone holding fluid and doing their job of keeping the coolant below boiling point. Of course, the left one has been welded after I ripped the head off it (fnar!) but that's just a minor detail.

The biggest problem with them is that they're bent to buggery and it's impossible to get the bolt holes for the rad

scoops to line up. With new stock rads costing a ridiculous amount like-for-like replacement isn't an option which is actually quite all right because another British engineering company have got a solution.

GMX Radiators have been developing and fabricating quality race products for years and although most well known for their work with radiators they also produce oil coolers, silicone hoses and alloy tanks. We've previously used GMX oversize radiators on our 2004 KX250F and '06 CRF450 long-term test bikes so we know they're high-performing super-tough products that are so well built they only pick up a fraction of the damage a standard radiator would over the course of a race season.

But as well as these oversized items, GMX produce a stock sized radiator that's designed and built to be a direct – albeit a million times stronger – replacement for the originals. Priced at eight pence and £388 per pair they're almost 200 quid cheaper than the OEM items so I definitely know which ones I'd rather fork out for especially since it's another chance to directly support British industry and by extension the British economy too.

Like I've said many times before we're very lucky to have so many cutting-edge motorcycle product manufacturers right here in the UK so it's only right to support them. That's why I'm running British-built Hollis Wheels, a Pulse-MX throttle tube and custom gas cap and of course the GMX radiators.

Next month, we'll be putting more British produce through the wringer and maybe returning the RMX to enduro trim, or maybe not – this flat track business is just too much fun...

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THE H-BOMB!

WITH ANOTHER DBR RESTORATION JOB LONG OVERDUE, WE GOT OCCASIONAL DBR TECHNICAL CONTRIBUTOR ROB BAYMAN TO PULL HIS '81 YZ465H OUT OF THE CELLAR FOR QUITE POSSIBLY OUR MOST CHALLENGING PROJECT SHED SO FAR...

Words by **Rob Bayman** Engine photo by **Andrew Walch**

Over 30 years ago the first ever DBR featured an advertisement for the cutting-edge technology of the short-lived YZ465H. Well back then I was thrashing round Manchester AMCA tracks aboard a YZ465H that was bought new by my brother Tony from former Yamaha dealers Sports Equipe for the princely sum of £1,490.

I raced the bike in 1981 and '82 and the motorcycle press all raved about the Yamaha which featured a ground-breaking twin leading shoe front brake – a concept previously used on road bikes – and massive 43mm forks which today look like drinking straws.

Just to confuse the '80s racers who understood little about compression and rebound adjustments, the YZ had 30 adjustable positions on the rear shock. I remember myself lacking the sensitivity to determine any difference between the settings and like most racers back then rode the bike exactly as it came from the shop throughout the year. The technology associated with self-adjustment was far too scary for most club racers and was better left to the few who understood it.

Undoubtedly, the YZ465H was an advancement on its predecessor – the aptly-named YZ465G – although the H was really just a G with different graphics and some factory ironing to its smooth yet strong power that lay rather low in the range with little to scream about on top. The five-speed box was silky smooth by comparison to the European machines of the era and packaged with the engine's lack of high-end power you usually needed to shift up another gear to help the big Yam reach its blistering speeds.

The sales blurb featured in the original DBR advert also proudly announced that the 465 had a shorter clutch lever – no doubt Kawasaki, Suzuki and Honda were beside themselves with worry at that point!

Before the days of specification trimming to make bikes affordable, marketing favoured the package over price approach with boxed additions used to promote a bike's unique selling points. The YZ465H was no exception and came with a large box full of spare or alternative parts and useful bits like replacement standard and oversize pistons, enough piston rings to race for a decade, front and rear sprockets, gaskets,

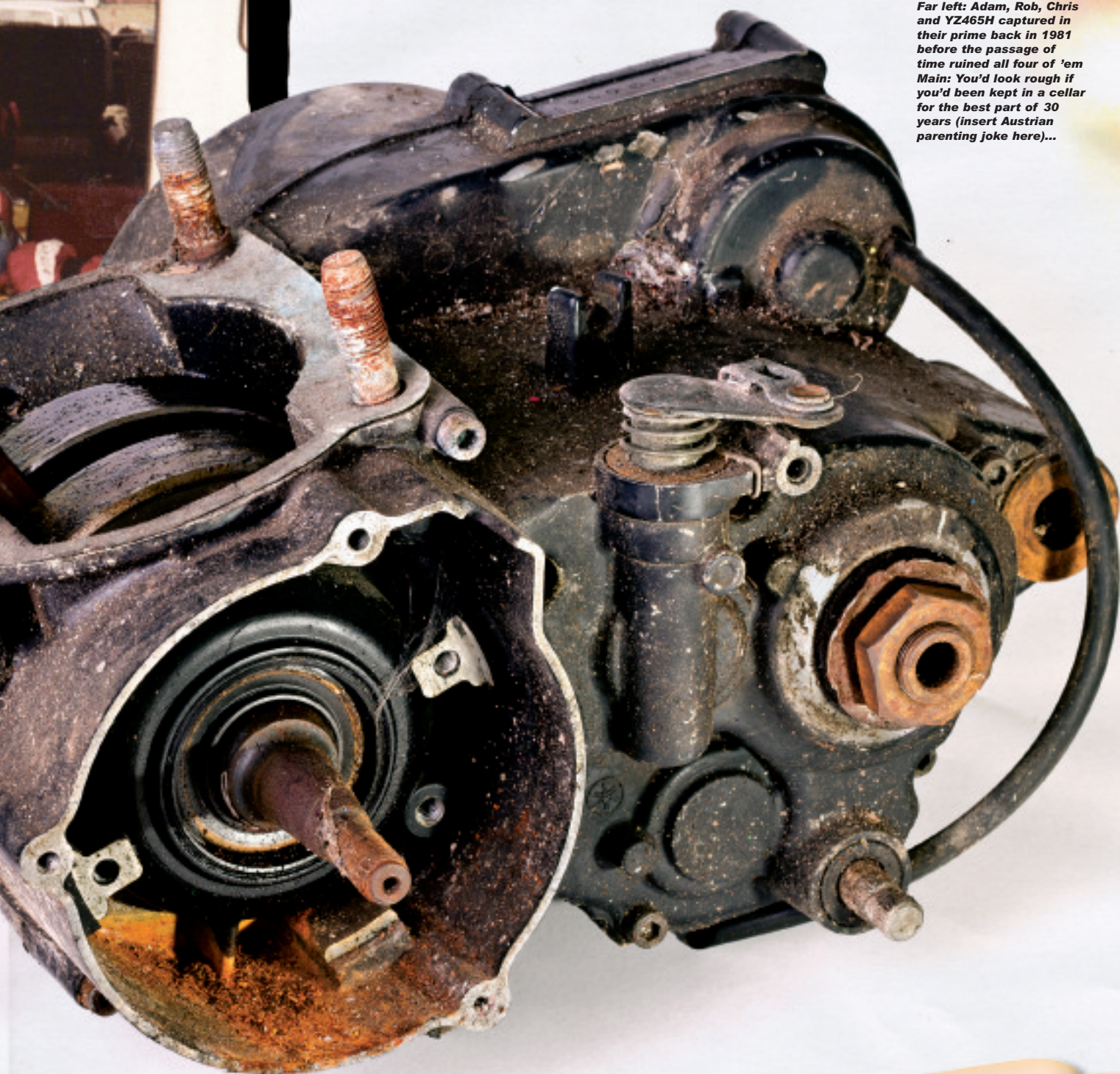
optional heavier rear spring, carb jets, gaskets, tools, a tyre pressure gauge (which I still use) and a brilliant manual.

The manual scripted an education in depth – including a passage on the effects of altitude on carburation – and accompanied by continual warnings it attempted to describe how to understand the suspension settings. Oddly, it also pointed out where the brake pedal and kickstart were just in case some utter idiot purchased one of the fastest motocross bikes on the planet on a mere whim. Well it sort of makes sense – if you teach someone how to start it best teach them how to stop it too!

For all its quirkiness, the YZ465H was considered by many – including myself – as the hot ticket on the 1981 club scene, even though the bike we saw ridden at GP level featured future technologies at least 12 months in advance of the bike sold at the dealers. That was the era when the factory bikes were hand-built versions of the following year's production machines costing up to 50 times the price of a stock model.

Many of the YZ465s have long been reduced to field

*Far left: Adam, Rob, Chris and YZ465H captured in their prime back in 1981 before the passage of time ruined all four of 'em
Main: You'd look rough if you'd been kept in a cellar for the best part of 30 years (insert Austrian parenting joke here)...*



bikes or simply scrapped as technology was evolving at its fastest for many years. Technological advancements aside, for no apparent reason I kept my YZ465H and stripped it down to save space so the bike never wound up on Death Row.

Then, in a recent Eureka moment spurred on by my Maico-racing cousin Phil, I decided to resurrect the bike and come out of retirement to race it in 2012. Imagine a 21-year-old keeping his KTM 350SX in the cellar for 30 years and then resurrecting and racing it in 2041 when he's 51 – crazy or what? But when motocross bikes are battery-powered a generation stuck in the four-stroke era will rejoice.

The bike's parts have been gathered from their various locations around the workshop with a few bits borrowed by people over the years and not returned, like the kickstart lent to a guy that committed suicide or the carb which was borrowed to try on a kart which was subsequently sold with the kart – and the electrics are another story.

But with the exception of the few missing items the bike remains original, only modified by plastic

unbreakable levers and an extended seat foam and cover by Ceet to improve forward positioning for modern fangled cornering techniques.

My initial observation after rendering droves of spiders destitute and evicting the mice from their cosy air filter bed is that the motor is in remarkable condition. Foolishly the top was separated from the bottom which has rusted the liner and contaminated the exposed small end which will call for at least a re-bore and crank rod but beyond that the internals are virtually as new with just a spot of rusting to few items as our picture shows.

Over the coming months the bike will be put back together close to its original trim – although it will be introduced to a little 21st Century technology – and raced with regular progress reports and some comparisons against the current breed. |





KEEPING THE FAITH!

SINCE LEAVING THE SCHOOLIES IT'S BEEN A HARD ROAD IN THE PRO RANKS FOR NEZ PARKER BUT THANKS TO HIS DETERMINATION AND SHEER BLOODY HARD WORK – PLUS A ROCK SOLID TEAM BOSS – THINGS ARE JUST STARTING TO PAY OFF FOR THE BOOST KTM RIDER...

Words by **Sean Lawless** Photos by **Sutty**

Nez Parker is playing catch-up. With schoolboy peers Tommy Searle and Jake Nicholls tearing it up on the world championship stage, the Boost KTM rider from Leyland in Lancashire is lining up for what could be his first full season of GPs. And he knows if he gets the chance he needs to make up for lost time but after testing the water this season with mixed results at three GPs he also knows just how steep the learning curve's going to be.

"My first GP in France was a massive eye-opener. At the start of the year I was hoping for a top 20 when I first did a grand prix but if you look down the list there's at least 15 riders there who have all won a

race at a GP. It's just a massive eye-opener to get lapped and then look back and see them coming to lap you again."

At 22 years of age Nez is a little on the old side to be kicking off a GP career. But while his rivals from the schoolboy ranks were learning the ropes as teenage tearaways, he was sidelined with a succession of injuries that threatened to eclipse his early promise.

"Going into the Under 21s when I was 17 I did my knee and was out for nine months which really set me back and then since then it's been a case of come back for a bit, get injured, come back again and get injured again. I've done my right knee three times now – my ACL twice and my MCL once – plus loads

of little injuries so, including this year, I've only had three full years in the adults that I've actually finished.

"I think while Tommy and Jake have risen up to where they are now, because of the injuries I'm still two or three years behind where I should be. I've not had the training or the coaching – all that's starting to come now and I'm developing later than they have. But it might not be a bad thing – I may not get burnt out and I'm still getting better and better and hopefully more mature and that will help me in the future."

When Nez rolled up at our Morecambe HQ for this interview he came across as being thoughtful and very positive – qualities that undoubtedly helped him deal with his grand prix baptism of fire when >>



Nez cranks up the 450 at the Duns round of the Maxxis

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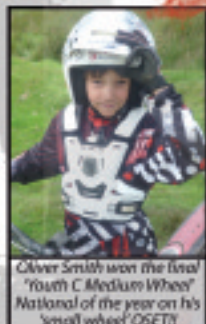


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Tearing it up at Morecambe skate park before some scary kids came along...

Nez started the year on a 350 but upgraded after struggling to get out the gate



he ran 28-27 in France before crashing out in Germany and reinjuring a neck injury at Matterley Basin.

"At first it was bad for my confidence but then you go to a British the weekend after and it feels so tame and so mild – the first corner feels like everyone's dead polite and don't want to hit you whereas at a GP it feels like a bomb's just gone off and the first few laps it's absolute chaos.

"It depends how you take it. If you see it as learning – rather than 'I'm getting beat' – then it won't affect your confidence. You've just got to enjoy the experience when you're there and I think it's definitely helped me although I've had a few crashes. They might beat you up when you're there but when you come back it's like going to a club meeting. I know there are fast

people at the British but there are so many more fast people in the GPs.

"The plan is to do a full season of GPs next year although that's not certain at the moment – it depends on backing and what happens with the team."

Nez may be a latecomer to GPs but he was certainly an early-starter when it came to bikes. With a couple of older brothers who raced the opportunity to ride was always there and Nez started out on a PW50 at the age of two – "I rode it straight into a tree" – before starting racing at six.

"I did all the nationals as a schoolboy but didn't do that good until I started getting into the small wheels and big wheels. I was second in the small wheels in the BYMX behind Tommy

Searle and I think I was sixth or seventh in the big wheels. I was there or thereabouts but I was always up against Tommy, Ray Rowson, Jake Nicholls and those boys so there was a lot of competition."

After turning pro at 17 Nez rode for the now defunct One11 KTM dealership on a 250, quickly picked up an injury, came back on a 450 and then got injured again. When the shop closed Burnley businessman Steve Turner stepped in with backing that continues to this day.

"First off all Steve helped me out with a bike and then he decided to run his own team and I've been with him since then. The first year I rode for him properly I was injured at the first round of the 2008 British championship at Donington and was out for the full year. >>



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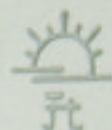
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ROLE MODELS!

BEST OF BRITISH

"I didn't really follow motocross when I was growing up. Until I was 14 or 15 I didn't watch it on TV or anything, I just raced at weekends and that was it. But when I did start to follow it I was looking at the people at the top in the British like Brad and James Noble."

"James and Brad have got totally different styles but they're both good to watch – I used to watch James and think he wasn't going fast but when you look closely you appreciate how great his throttle control is. With Brad it's a case of 'how did he get away with that?'. And they're both genuine blokes, not superstars – anyone can go up and speak to them."

"I didn't know a massive amount about James when he first came on the team – he came on halfway through the year when we had Jordan Rose on the team who introduced us. Everyone around him really likes him and gets on with him and when you spend some time with him you can see why because he's just genuine."

"He still rings me now and still comes to races and points stuff out to me – he does everything he can to help."



Nez steers the 450 to his best ever Maxxis race finish at Foxhill

But he stuck by me and has done ever since.

"He's such a genuine bloke and very easy going. You wouldn't know what he's done in business if you saw him in his scruffy boots and scruffy jeans just having a laugh. He's like a little kid when you go out with him. And he's so easy to get on with – if he's not happy with something he'll just tell you and you sort it out there and then and there's not an issue."

"He's sort of like a dad – I've been on his team for a few years now and he's always there for me. I wouldn't be in the position I'm in now if it wasn't for Steve. Same with my family – they got me so far along and then Steve's taken me the next step where we wouldn't be able to go. My first full season I didn't get any good results and was struggling but he saw me improving and that's what he wanted. I think as long as I keep improving and as long as I keep putting the effort in then he'll be happy to stick by me."

After flying under the radar for much of his adult career, 2011 has seen Nez take a big step forward. Currently seventh in the Maxxis series thanks to some great results including a race two second at Foxhill and fourth in the Red Bull Pro Nationals with a second overall at Canada

Heights to his name, this season has done a lot to erase the disappointment of 2010.

"Last year I was hoping to do better than I did. I almost had a full season but I tore ligaments in my hand and missed the last two rounds of the Red Bull Pro Nationals at Foxhill and Wakes Colne so I dropped right down. I struggled with my fitness a lot too – I think it was due to over-training. It's all about sorting out the little problems. Last year was a learning curve and I'm developing all the time – learning how my body is, learning how to test bikes and set bikes up because I missed out on that when I was younger. And this year's been a massive step again."

"I know a few people have got injured but you can only race who's there. It's been a really good year, I keep improving and we're getting there with the bike. I'm enjoying it and I feel like I belong now. I still don't have massive self-confidence now but it's growing and growing every time I get a good result so hopefully with a bit of good luck at the end of the year I can be top three in the Red Bull and move up to fourth in the Maxxis."

"I've had some good rides this year."

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Nez is aiming for top three in the UK on 2012



Foxhill was one. I know Brad had a bit of misfortune but although Martin [Barr] gapped me a bit I kept that gap the same all the way to the end to get second. Canada Heights was another and I finished on the overall podium after two strong rides."

Nez started the season on a 350 but moved up to a 450 – the bike he'll race again next year – after failing to gel with the new Austrian machine. And once he had the extra cubes under him his season started to pick up.

"I took a while to get warmed up to the season and the first few rounds had average results but from there it's just got better and better. I was struggling a bit on the 350. I enjoy riding the bike and it's so much fun to go practising on but for someone of my size – I'm 13-and-a-half stone – it's just not got enough for me to ride. In a race if I don't get out of the gate I struggle. And the 450's good and now Dungey's going onto it in America they'll be developing fuel injection for it."

The atmosphere under the Boost KTM awning's usually one of the most laidback in the paddock and after racing alongside his friend James Noble in 2010, Nez has found another ally in the shape of Martin Barr. The Irishman's enjoying a pretty stellar season of his own and Nez is quick to praise his team-mate for

bringing him on.

"Having Martin on the team has helped me a lot. When we go practising he's so fast and I'm always chasing him. Even if I feel I'm going good he'll come and go quicker and it's pushing me on. There may be some parts of a track where I'll back off a little but he won't so I have to step it up. It's also helpful to watch him, to see how he picks lines."

With the season almost over Nez is aiming to finish out his remaining races in one piece and then build on his new-found speed and confidence over the off-season. And if all goes well he hopes to continue to improve and impress – especially if he gets to showcase his talents on the world stage.

"I think if I get a good solid winter in again then top 20 in GPs would be realistic – maybe not at the start but if I keep plugging away... You can't expect just to do one or two GPs and get good results, you need to do the whole thing and get into the whole routine as there's a lot of racing over the weekend."

"In Britain if I can step up again next year then top three is the goal. It's going to be hard and there's going to be a few more people in there but we'll see – I need to just keep getting on the podium and if I keep improving like I have been then I reckon it's a realistic goal."



Scuba's Suzuki's funky suspension set-up works surprisingly well with the much bigger-boned Ed on board

SCUBA DRIVER!



AFTER ACCEPTING AN INVITATION FROM TEAM BOSS ROB HOOPER WE GET TO TEST SCUBA STEVE CLARKE'S MAXXIS APICO SUZUKI...

Words by Ed Bradley Photos by Sully

It's a sunny September day and we're at Doncaster Moto Parc testing Steven Clarke's RM-Z250. Scuba Steve's packed a lot into his career including an 85cc world title and AMA SX and MX before signing to race with Rob Hooper on the Maxxis Apico Suzukis in 2011.

Steve's time in the US has seen him record top 10 finishes in Lites supercross races – his highest position being a brilliant fifth – and he's been a regular top 20 runner outdoors. Team boss Rob Hooper is a vastly experienced former GP rider who's been running his own team for longer than virtually anyone else on the British scene.

So with Steve's input and Rob's experience have the pair of them built a competitive racing machine?

First of all let's start by looking at the components Rob's used to produce his latest racing rocket – and there's a lot of them! The bolt-on bits include a CP high compression piston, Yoshimura cams, Carrillo con rod and Tokyo Mods Manual cam chain tensioner. Now add MX Zone flow work which includes fitting copper beryllium valve seats and guides to work with Xceldyne valves and springs along with a specific modification in the crankcase and all you're left with a standard cylinder!

This bike is littered with hop-ups and modifications. It's covered with the usual after-market products such as Raptor footrests, Factory Connection clutch lever, Zeta bits and

bobs and my favourite on any racing machine – a 270mm oversized front brake disc and Venhill steel braided hoses which on Steve's bike are yellow. Marry these with the yellow anodised rims and the bike looks factory trick as it brings out that extra bit of Suzuki yellow that you wouldn't get on a stocker.

The bike breathes bucketfuls of air through its high flow filter cage and Moto Tassinari Air4orce air boot and slips into the head through an in-house modified throttle body, then meets the fuel with a big bang from the re-mapped ignition and is finally spat out through the Akrapovic exhaust system! Rob uses a pair of modified RM-Z450 rads to keep this little fire-breather cool.

Steve's department is the suspension and it is the one thing that he wanted to bring to the team from America. Factory Connection is big in the States and the settings on this Suzi are likely to be different to most in the UK paddock. As you push the forks up and down there is very little resistance, the rebound is quite quick and they feel smooth, plush and easy to push through the stroke – perhaps a little too easy!

Steve has his rear suspension with the static sag set at 110mm. Inquisitively, I asked Rob if that's because he is running with a harder spring and surprisingly the answer was 'no'. The back end of the bike sits low and that's just the way he likes it.

Steve is 5' 6" and weighs 11-and-a-half

>>

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It's a well thumbbed cliché but the Maxxis Apico machine really does corner like it's on rails



stone and I'm 6' 2" and weigh 14-and-a-half stone. When I get on this bike and give it a good blast around my track the bike is probably going to look like a Harley chopper with me having to dislocate my ankles to get one foot under the gear lever to change up and the other to press the brake pedal which seems to be lower than the frame before I even get to press it. As for the levers, I didn't know what I was going to do as they felt like they were hanging down vertically.

Now this is great if you are a shorter rider like Steve and stand centrally on the bike. As a taller rider that stands comfortably behind the centre of the bike, using the controls set up as they are for Steve was going to be a mission.

So how did it go? Well I did find it hard to use the controls as they were. Changing gear for some reason wasn't too bad – although I missed the rear brake a number of times – and the bottom-end power was strong enough to pull me out of the turns without having to use the clutch. Weirdly, the low Ricky Carmichael bend handlebars felt fine and the position between the

bars, seat and footpegs also felt great.

After completing an initial 15 minutes of riding and getting a good feel for Steve's machine I was satisfied that it sucks riding a bike with the controls in positions that I'd have to look up in the Karma Sutra! I'd done my time so after a couple of adjustments – to the levers and pedals only – I got to really ride this racing machine and, boy, this is a great bike to ride.

Bearing in mind that I am a lot heavier than Steve I absolutely loved the suspension. The forks were really smooth and plush on the down stroke, especially the top to mid-part of the stroke. However, I did find that in two places on the track I totally bottomed the forks out to the point where I could feel the tyre rubbing under the front mudguard but you could just put that down to the weight difference between us.

The rebound felt a little quick which would only be a slight adjustment on the clickers but I found that the more I rode the bike and got used to the front brake the better the forks worked in the braking areas. >>

It's #511 vs #511 as Steve shows the elder statesman how it's done!





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If you're prepared to work hard the Suzuki becomes a proper rocketship



The shock worked just as well and made for an easy ride over the sharpest of bumps and landings in a silky smooth fashion. Yes, the back end rides a little low and there is a slight compromise to be made for the two tight hardpack corners on the track but the gain is on all the other flowing turns on the rest of the track and either using the small sandy berms or railing the banked berms the bike felt like it was on rails. There was no twitching or swapping, the bike just followed the berms easily meaning that it was possible to get the throttle opened up quickly and early.

When you open the throttle quickly and early you need to be hanging on because this bike rips off the bottom and feels really strong well into the mid-range power. Much quicker than a stocker which you would like to expect after reeling off the list of modifications in the motor! The top-end was disappointing though. With having a big smile produced by the g-force pushing the skin back on my face, I just wanted it to carry on going and rev to the moon and for the bike to continue accelerating. But once past the strong mid-range, very soon into the top-end the revs hit their peak and you can feel the bike

holding back.

To ride this bike fast there is no way you can be lazy. So long as you hook up the gears in the right places at the right time then this machine is a rocketship and the motor is a pleasure to use.

It's a pretty good job then that the brakes are awesome! It's been some time since I've got on a bike and had to think about how much pressure I'm putting on the lever. To start off with I kept locking up the front wheel heading into the turns but as I got used to its power my timing improved and the forks began to work better as I mentioned earlier. The rear brake's razor sharp too with just a better than standard hose on it! After riding I excitedly asked Rob about the front brake. I have used a 270mm oversized disc before with a steel braded hose, however, this brake was exceptional and I wondered how he got it so keen. The answer was simply that the brake is bled regularly and serviced well.

It's an answer that pretty much sums up the Maxxis Apico Suzuki. It's looked after in fine detail and modified in fine detail which has produced a racing bike that's capable of running up front at any of the major UK series. This is a proper racing machine.



THE **FULL** WORKS!

THE DAY AFTER THE DES NATIONS OUR CHIEF BIKE TESTER CHOWS DOWN ON THE COMPLETE MENU OF KTM'S GP FACTORY BIKES AT ST JEAN D'ANGELY...

Words by Jeff Perrett Photos by Ray Archer

MX1 world champions! MX2 world champions! Women's MX world champions! Again! Another clean sweep in the world of grand prix motocross proves that KTM know how to make a sublime dirtbike. So let's put that notion in motion and to the test...

You really don't have to be Einstein to work out that KTM have a brilliant motocross programme going. What's been pouring out of their factory in Mattighofen over the last decade is an incredible desire to be the best, melted down into serious manufacturing excellence that spills out all over race tracks in countries around the globe.

Arguably the only country where

their seed of success hasn't really grown is America but I've got a feeling that's about to blossom some time soon and I'm sure KTM do too – they've definitely invested time and money into it. Now their US army is fronted by General Roger De Coster and with a crack team of Marvin Musquin, Ryan Dungey and Ken Roczen they certainly have a more realistic chance of winning battles and maybe even the war over there.

But it won't be easy. And that's why it's difficult not to do anything but applaud the effort that KTM have put into winning races and making bikes for just about every level of racer at every age.

At the sharp end of professional racing in the world championships they've dominated the last couple of years and regardless of how good the riders have been the race bikes have to take a lot of credit as I'm sure the riders themselves will testify.

I've had the privilege – and it is a privilege – to test the factory KTMs several times before and every time I walk away with a smile on my fat, ginger Chevy Chase. This time was no different.

I had a shot on all of the factory riders' bikes – that's six of them – the day after the Motocross des Nations at the St Jean d'Angely circuit and here's what I thought of them...



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THE 350SX-Fs

They rip! Bet you weren't expecting me to say that! Let's start with Cairoli's weapon. Compared with the stocker this year's championship-winning bike feels much, much more aggressive and maybe that's because at the level these guys race giving away 100cc is far more dramatic. For the club racer I still feel a 350 is more than enough and you can get away with giving up that extra horsepower.

As you'd expect it's as sharp as a tack off the bottom and instantly picks up and at that point is still smooth in its delivery. It's when you get just past that and towards the end of the early power range that it then pulls heavily on your arms. That explains a lot. Basically it allows Cairoli to do what he does best and that's ride with aggression.

If he had the same power curve on a 450 it would pull so much on his shoulders it would be almost impossible to ride with his natural style. Once that power comes in not only does it stay all through the mid-range it gets stronger and you can hook gears and use the torque of the motor or let it rev on a little longer and that's a great position to be in out on the track.

At the very top end it still revs to the moon and it needs to against the 450s. Although there wasn't a 450 to compare it with on the day I think at the very top-end it isn't quite on par with its 450 rivals but then that's to be expected. Truth is a motocross bike is more often than not mostly ridden in its mid-range and bearing that in mind this bike has everything it needs right there.

It gives Tony huge scope and potential to match his obvious talent.

I mean consider this – his 2010 bike didn't quite have the grunt of this one and yet he won a race at the USGP on the steep hills of Glen Helen stuck in third gear. Herlings, riding a factory 350 at the MXdN, held off a late charge from Ryan Villopoto also stuck in third gear so the proof is in the pudding.

Nagl's bike is much smoother than Cairoli's and there's a reason for that – his bad back! After talking to the KTM technicians it's clear the bike has been tamed down throughout the latter part of the season to make it easier to ride. Max has been in tremendous pain and really been struggling so they've done all they can to tame the beast in the hope he could still push for race wins.

Obviously he couldn't and obviously neither could I but I have to say from my point of view I'm thankful for KTM's efforts. I found Max's bike much easier to ride around what Blake Baggett described as the most technical track he's ever ridden. It's equally as crisp from the bottom but the power isn't as revvy and has a wider spread of torque.

Both bikes easily pulled third gear starts but because of the power delivery on Cairoli's bike it seemed to handle that task a little easier. Max prefers more engine braking, Tony likes it more hard-hitting and that's very much the case and that's mostly achieved with different mapping.



Cairoli's 350 rips – no surprise there then...



Nagl's bike has been tailored – motor and suspension – to help the German cope with the pain from his injured back

I also preferred Nagl's suspension. Both riders are of small build but again to assist Max with his back problem the suspension – like the motor – has softer valving and isn't so well catered to hard hits. Tony's bike is just that bit stiffer and, like his motor, more so in the middle of the stroke – both front and rear.

At the top of the stroke on both bikes and on both WP units they performed great and filled me with confidence on a circuit that can easily take that away from a rider. I could really chuck either bike into a rut easily and get on the gas with the confidence that it was going to stick – the same went for getting the grunt down when there wasn't a rut or berm to carve on. On some of the bigger jumps and downhills both bikes felt equal on impact, it was just through the first two thirds of the stroke you could really tell the difference.

I also preferred the ergonomics of Nagl's bike. It felt just that little bit lower and I liked the seat with the cut-out that we now see on many bikes. For Max that probably made life a little bit easier on his back as it locks the rider into position through the turns.

The balance of both bikes really makes you feel part of the mechanics of it all. Since Stefan Everts got involved with the ergonomic design KTMs have had a much better rider/bike synergy anyway and with the factory able to really fine tune to each rider's desire I'd find it difficult to think any of them ever find reason to grumble once all the testing is out of the way. >>

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Out of the factory MX2 bikes it's Van Horebeek's that Jeff feels most at home on

several starts on each bike and every one of them felt like I was being fired out of a catapult.

By the time I got to ride Steffi Laier's championship winning bike I was pretty spent. What with being old, fat and still recovering from the MXdN and the Sunday night party I was flaky but as it turned out I loved it. Steffi's bike is last year's MX2 championship-winning machine ridden by Marvin Musquin but tamed down a little with a smoother, easier-to-ride power and softer spec suspension.

I'm not surprised by that, particularly on the suspension because Musquin's was so hard last year – the front forks in particular. I know he's a small superfly guy and Steffi is much the same but I'd be amazed if they had the same suspension set-up. Steffi's bike wasn't as fast as the lads' MX2 bikes but in truth I felt more at home on it and that's probably why.

When all's said and done, just as is the case with the 350s, results do the talking. And in 2011 KTM have hardly shut up...



All the factory MX2 machines run a four-speed box compared to the stocker's six gears



Jeff cuts loose on the world #2 bike



THE 250SX-Fs

Since the year 2000 KTM have won eight world titles in the 125/MX2 class. I think that's proof enough that when it comes to making a good bike in the "tiddler" class they are better than the rest.

This year they did it with the phenomenal talents of Ken Roczen and you could argue that he would've won on any factory bike which may have been the case but we'll never know. Either way, he didn't win it before he got on a KTM did he?

Ken's bike was the first of four factory 250 SX-Fs I rode and without question it was definitely the most unique in feel. It was like riding a pit bike with a top fuel funny car engine under the tank. As he's proved time and time again this year, out of the gate it's a rocketship so no real surprise there but compared to a stock KTM it's the set-up that really sets it apart.

As soon as you hop on his bike you notice the handlebars and levers. The bars are swept back further than they appear and they are considerably narrower than what is the norm – an inch-and-a-half at each end – and that's what makes it feel like you're sat on a minibike. Unlike Nagl's levers which are about half-an-inch higher above the bars, Ken's levers are about an inch-and-a-half lower.

The rear end of Ken's bike sits lower too and once you get moving on it that encourages the rider to steer with the rear. You really can get back over the rear mudguard, lock your arms straight, keep it lit and use your bodyweight to turn. That technique is probably

made easier because of Ken's size. Van Horebeek and Herlings in particular are taller and therefore would probably feel like their suspension had collapsed if they ran with Ken's set-up.

As for the fine tuning of the suspension, Ken's bike was very similar to Nagl's while Jeffrey's and Jeremy's were like Cairoli's so in that respect they all felt very familiar.

Herlings has his bars high and much further forward but then that's what you'd expect for his height. For me it was a touch too much but then the bike isn't built for me to turn laps around St Jean d'Angely. Jeremy Van Horebeek's bike was definitely the one out of the three MX2 machines that suited me the best because of the ergonomics.

On the motor front to be fair there didn't seem to be much in the three. All of them run a four-speed gearbox compared with the stock bike that runs a six-speed. When I asked the team why that was the case the reply – accompanied by a big smile – was "because we have enough power not to worry about first and sixth!" Fair enough!

The KTMs are renowned for their lightning starts and this might explain why. All three of them start in first gear which is effectively second gear for the stock bike and with the gears much closer they are soon hooking second gear and are still right there in the incredible mid-range torque. It must be great going to the line knowing you have that underneath you. I tried





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GRIPPING YARNS!

OUR TECHNICAL EDITOR HEADS TO ITALY FOR THE LAUNCH OF THE NEW PIRELLI SCORPION RANGE...

Words by Godfrey Walker Photo by rayarcher.com

Why re-invent the wheel? That was my first thought when the Pirelli Scorpion MX range presentation started in a very warm Italy.

I've memories of the Pirelli brand from many years ago in GP racing when the majority of tracks were good and provided a great test for man and machine. An example of this was an awesome 250 GP in San Marino...

The track there was superb and prepped to the minimum. We as mechanics had to prep the bikes and prepare for nature as anything could happen. This could be stressful as you didn't always have the 'right' tyre for the surface and I always remember wondering how the Italians could always find grip when the surface was hard and polished – and then

still find grip after it had started to rain!

This used to do my head in as I would be there with tyre levers flying and myself and Rob Herring scratching our collective heads trying to find the right tyre for the job from our sponsor's range while some Italian teams were kicking back, stress free and not thinking about a tyre change no matter what the weather chucked at them or the track...

Basically, what I'm saying is that even back in 1996 the Pirelli MT32 was the tyre for all conditions. Maybe not the longest-lasting tyre but in top-flight MX racing it is all about the grip. And regular doses of fresh rubber!

Pirelli have been going since 1904 and their involvement in motorsport covers many different disciplines at the very highest level. The MX range



David Philipparts (#19), Anthony Boissiere (#10), Tony Cairoli (#222) and Clement Desalle (#25) put Pirelli rubber to the test at the highest level

began in 1980 and from then they have captured 56 world titles which speaks volumes. The range includes tyres for all occasions from the 410 for sand, the 32 for mud, sand, gravel and grass, the mid-hard 554 for loose and hardpack and the full-on hard 486.

Add to this range the new Extra X tyre for all conditions and longer-lasting performance for the mid-week training pro and amateur rider and racer and the range is looking good.

The technology Pirelli use in the chemical make-up of the tyres is to the highest level and, as they say, the factory riders they provide rubber for really do race the same tyres as we can all buy from our local dealers.

The tyre pretty much every factory-supported

GP racer has used for years is the 32. This can be used in all conditions and if you are after ultimate performance and can afford new rubber most weekends then this is the one.

Pirelli have also made a 125-specific tyre which has been developed in the 125 European championships this year. The 110/85-19 size is specific for 125cc bikes and offers a greater grip platform across the knobs to plant the tyre onto the ground through a bigger footprint.

The tyre which caught my eye from the range was the Extra X as the company have aimed this tyre at all of us 'normal' riders who want to buy a tyre and find it grips well without every knob being ripped off in one day/moto. The compounds used on the Extra X take

development to a greater level as the compound is made to resist 'tearing' so it'll keep you gripping and ripping for longer in all conditions.

The other all-new tyre is the 554 for hard tracks and this uses a compound consisting of a higher reinforcing structure using a mixing process for improved dispersion into the polymer matrix which has a higher molecular weight and improved interaction with the filler. Basically, every care is taken to blend the tyre compound to find grip while you are laying down the ponies on your local hard track.

We have the range of tyres coming soon for an extensive test so watch this space and you too could be wearing the famous yellow and red hat while spraying the champagne!

CLOSING TIME!

**THE AMA SERIES WRAPS UP AT PALA WITH VILLOPOTO
TAKING THE 450cc SPOILS WHILE DOWN IN THE
250cc DIVISION THERE'S A SCOT ON TOP...**



It's not that the Lucas Oil/AMA Pro Motocross Championships are anti-climactic, they just sort of climax early (like DBR Editor Sean Lawless is known for).

As the series heads to the penultimate round at Steel City, Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki's swift Scot Dean Wilson has a pretty commanding lead in the championship which means that his team-mates Tyla Rattray and Blake Baggett have to make up some ground in the points standings – and quick!

GEICO Honda's rookie Justin Bogle grabs the first 250cc moto holeshot but Wilson pushes him wide and assumes the lead right away. Bogle makes a couple of early runs at Wilson but he eventually falls behind in the heat and Wilson pulls away to a commanding moto victory.

But the story of the championship is happening behind Wilson. Bogle soon falls into the clutches of his team-mate Eli Tomac who takes over second before Bogle fades a bit more in the very hot and humid conditions, allowing reigning MX2 world champion Marvin Musquin into third, Wilson's team-mate Rattray into fourth and third Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki racer Baggett into fifth. Bogle finishes sixth.

The fourth-placed finish for Rattray is devastating in the championship chase as he goes from 38 to 45 points down which means if he finishes third or worse in the next moto and Wilson wins the championship is over.

In moto two Musquin gets the holeshot but Wilson is quickly around him and then Tomac comes by both of them to lead the first lap over Wilson, Musquin, Alex Martin, Kyle Cunningham, Baggett and Rattray. Wilson retakes the lead from Tomac just before halfway and begins to pull away but his team-mates Rattray and Baggett are having trouble coming through the pack and Baggett ends up going down a few laps in, costing him a ton of valuable time.

By the end of the race the best Rattray can muster is to catch up to fourth again behind Musquin in third and Tomac in second. Rattray's team-mate Broc Tickle comes home fifth after retiring from moto one with a mechanical failure and Baggett recovers for eighth.

The 1-1 score for Wilson lands him a perfect 50 points on the day and with Rattray starting out the day 38 points back, Wilson moves ahead 14 more points and clinches the championship one round early.



Super Scot Dean Wilson – seen here leading two-time world MX2 champ Marvin Musquin – takes the AMA 250cc title with a double win at Steel City



Cycle News he's struck out on his own to do the freelance thing. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides insight straight from the Stateside scene...

Steve Cox is a Glock-parkin', racoon-shootin', gung-ho American MX journo – think Hunter S Thompson with a moto-habit – who follows the entire AMA SX/MX tour. Since moving on from defunct US weekly

STATESIDE

FINAL SERIES STANDINGS

250cc

1	Dean Wilson	538
2	Tyla Ratray	472
3	Blake Baggett	469
4	Eli Tomac	314
5	Kyle Cunningham	311
6	Gareth Swanepoel	300
7	Broc Tickle	253
8	Alex Martin	213
9	Martin Davalos	213
10	Darryn Durham	195

450cc

1	Ryan Villopoto	526
2	Ryan Dungey	514
3	Chad Reed	429
4	Brett Metcalfe	374
5	Mike Alessi	304
6	Jake Weimer	271
7	Justin Brayton	218
8	Andrew Short	196
9	Kevin Windham	193
10	Davi Millsaps	173



Justin Barcia has impressed outdoors since his switch to a 450 and he almost wins at Pala



Former British championship rider Gareth Swanepoel has had a great debut season Stateside



Jake Weimer ends the season in sixth in the 450cc division

"I really didn't expect to make up 12 points today," Wilson says. "My parents are driving my motorhome back out to California from Florida right now and it's too bad they couldn't be here for this. They've done so much for me. I'm just so happy right now. I don't know what to say."

The Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki team has actually clinched the top three spots in the championship although it's not yet settled between Ratray and Baggett who will be number two or number three.

In the 450cc class Monster Energy Kawasaki's Ryan Villopoto leads the title by eight points going into Steel City and he gets the holeshot in the first moto but is immediately passed by Justin Barcia and then championship rival Ryan Dungey. Villopoto gets Barcia back during the first lap but Dungey has the lead and Villopoto spends the entire moto looking like he is attached to Dungey with a bungee cord – falling behind a bit, then catching up, then falling behind again...

With four laps to go Villopoto gets close to Dungey and he stays there, putting pressure on the

defending champ until in the final turn of the race Dungey makes a move to the inside to protect his lead position and then hesitates to make sure that Villopoto doesn't check up and dive under him. That moment of hesitation is all Villopoto needs as he pins it around the outside and steals the moto victory from Dungey in a dramatic moto finish that has huge championship implications.

If Dungey had taken the moto win he would trail Villopoto by only five points going into moto two. But by losing he trails by 11 points. That's a six-point swing. Dungey's second in front of team-mate Brett Metcalfe, Barcia, Chad Reed, Villopoto's team-mate Jake Weimer, Justin Brayton and Mike Alessi.

In moto two Dungey gets the holeshot but Villopoto makes a move right off the bat and from there just runs away with the win, pulling away steadily throughout the race while even Reed passes Dungey for second for a while, only for Dungey to get him back again a few laps later.

Villopoto goes on to take the victory with about 20 seconds to spare over Dungey who has a similar

lead on Reed by the end. Then comes Metcalfe, Alessi, Weimer and Brayton.

Villopoto goes 1-1 on the day for the second time in three weeks, repeating his performance from Unadilla and pulling his championship lead out to 14 points with two motos left to run.

"I can't ask for a lot more than that," Villopoto says at the end of the day. "I knew I needed to do something so that I had some breathing room at Pala and it came together. I can't wait for next week and then the Motocross of Nations after that!"

The series heads to the finale in Pala, California, where Dean won in 2010. Baggett grabs the holeshot in 250 moto one over team-mate and champion Wilson and their other team-mate Ratray. Wilson takes the lead before the end of lap one and never looks back while Baggett and Ratray fight it out over second place – a position that eventually goes to Baggett after a brief fight also with Musquin in the lead pack.

Fourth goes to Musquin over Gareth Swanepoel, Cunningham, Tomac, Jason Anderson, Martin Davalos and Bogle.

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In moto two Jimmy Decotis grabs the lead over his team-mate Bogle and Bogle makes an aggressive pass as the two head for the finish of the first lap to take the lead. Bogle leads the first 10 laps of the race before Wilson finally has enough speed to make a pass for the lead, having worked his way through a few riders in the early laps.

So Wilson takes over the lead and he holds it to the finish over Bogle, Baggett, Musquin, Rattray and Tickle.

"I felt like I was going to be strong here," Wilson says. "I won here last year too and I really like this track. It's kind of fast but I like it."

In the 450cc class Villopoto starts out moto one outside the top 10 and has to work his way forward while his old amateur rival Mike Alessi grabs the holeshot and leads the first few laps. Alessi eventually gives way to Barcia while Villopoto dukies it out with championship rival Dungey as the two move forward in unison.

The two Ryans swap spots repeatedly as they work through the pack until, on lap seven, Villopoto passes Dungey for third and Alessi for second on the same lap as Alessi has already given way to Justin Barcia for the lead spot. Barcia pulls out a massive lead in a short time which creates a ton of work for Villopoto as he attempts to chase Barcia down.

It takes Villopoto five laps to catch Barcia but when he does he makes a pass quickly and moves into the lead. Villopoto leads the last five laps of the race to take home the moto win in front of Dungey who passes Barcia later on in the moto. Villopoto extends his points lead to 17 points going into the final moto over Dungey, meaning a 13th-placed finish for Villopoto will secure him the title.

Following Villopoto and Dungey home in moto one are Barcia, Alessi, Metcalfe, Kyle Regal, Nico Izzi, Colton Facciotti and Weimer.

In moto two Justin Brayton grabs the holeshot



Justin Brayton at Pala



Chad Reed's championship challenge fades after his crash at Millville



Justin Bogle signs off with a race two second at Pala



Ryan Dungey wins the overall at Pala but Ryan Villopoto still takes his title from him

over Chad Reed, who quickly passes Brayton and begins to pull away. However, Barcia soon moves into second and begins chasing Reed down and it isn't long before Dungey and Villopoto join the fray. Barcia passes Reed for the lead on lap seven and then Dungey does likewise to Reed for second on lap nine. Then Villopoto dispatches of Reed on lap 11 as well.

With the top three running as they are – Barcia, Dungey, Villopoto – Barcia is in position to take the overall victory but just before the last lap flag Dungey makes the move for the lead, passing Barcia and pulling away for the moto victory. Villopoto hangs back in third, content to bring home his second national championship of 2011.

Dungey takes the overall win over Villopoto and Barcia but the championship belongs to Villopoto. "It's going to be a tough year to top," Villopoto says of his 2011 season. "We took home both championships and obviously that's the goal but it's hard to count on that kind of success."



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DARK HORSE!

HIS SX SEASON WAS SCUPPERED BY INJURY AND AFTER STRUGGLING DURING THE EARLY PART OF THE OUTDOORS HE SEEMED TO SLIP OFF THE RADAR BUT JAKE WEIMER IS THE REAL DEAL AND 2012 COULD VERY WELL BE HIS YEAR...

People aren't talking that much about Jake Weimer right now. But they should be. 'You're only as good as your last race,' only really applies to how a racer is perceived, not in reality how good he is. And the truth is that Jake Weimer is still the same Jake Weimer who absolutely dominated the 2010 Lites West Championship (beating Trey Canard, who won three supercrosses this year in the 450 class).

Prior to the start of the 2011 season, Monster Energy Kawasaki's Weimer was training and testing a lot with his team-mate Ryan Villopoto with whom he shares trainer Aldon Baker. Villopoto was just a tiny bit faster in pre-season testing but made a lot more mistakes. Overall, Weimer was just as fast as Villopoto. And we all know how this season ended up.

Unfortunately, Weimer hit a false neutral while training less than two weeks before Anaheim 1 and went over the bars. It resulted in a badly broken forearm. Weimer's season was over before it started.

"There were good days and bad days before the injury," Weimer says. "It definitely felt positive and I was getting more and more confident before it happened. The sh'tty thing about it was probably that the day before and the day I got hurt were the best that I had felt and I was feeling really good on the bike and feeling really confident. I was excited about it and was definitely feeling positive."

But then there was the crash...

"Well, obviously any time you get hurt is not fun and it's tough. And then to get hurt right before the season opener, having put all that time and effort in... I was bummed. But I think it probably got worse toward the end

of the injury because it was taking so long to heal. And then, even when I started riding again, it was kind of depressing too because I was dealing with a lot of pain still. So I would say the end of the injury and then when I first started riding was probably almost worse than the beginning just because I had planned on coming back and just getting right back into it but it definitely didn't work out that way.

"Initially I wanted to try and do five or six supercrosses and there was just no way. Ultimately, I wasn't really ready for the two supercrosses that I did ride. I already knew that but I wanted to do them anyway and just get some time in and race again because it had been so long. And when I did the last two supercrosses it still bothered me. It was starting to get better then and getting to the point where it wasn't that big of a deal but up until then it was still definitely an issue."

And the thing about a nagging injury like that for a racer at the top level is that they really need 100 per cent of their concentration on what they're doing in order to go as fast as they can. Having even a small amount of pain is enough to take focus away from what they're doing and just that little edge can be the difference between first and fifth.

"Everybody's different and every injury is different but I think something that everybody kind of has in common is that no matter what the injury is, if it is enough to bother you it kind of affects just your every day life as far as training or practising and also the mental side of it," Weimer says. "You're kind of always thinking about it. You've always got ice on it and you're doing this, you're doing that, trying to get the thing better and it's ♦



Jake struggled through the early rounds of the AMA Nationals as the pain from injuries and a lack of confidence took their toll

JAKE WEIMER #32

just so much time and energy.

"And mentally so much time goes into dealing with the injury that it's just tough to really focus on anything else. It's hard enough to go out with nothing on your mind and go fast and when you throw that in there it makes it even tougher – especially when the people that you want to be racing against are out there with one thing on their mind and that's just turning the throttle."

With his arm still nagging him but getting better every day, Weimer headed into the outdoor series. He has won a few Nationals in the past and even represented Team USA in 2009 in Italy but he hadn't been racing much and although he still denies being a 'supercross specialist' he is definitely more adept at racing indoors than out.

"I don't deny that," Weimer says. "I still, to this day, don't believe that I'm just a supercross specialist. I will say that supercross does come a little bit easier for me and I am a little more confident in supercross. I don't feel supercross is just easy or anything like that. But for whatever reason I do feel more confident in supercross and it's a little bit easier for me to build confidence and feel good about what's going on. In an ideal situation, I like to build some confidence through the supercross season and then I go into outdoors feeling good about things."

But that didn't happen this year. Instead, for more than half of the outdoor championship Weimer looked a bit like a fish out of water. He had moments of brilliance where he would run in the top five with Villopoto, Ryan Dungey, Chad Reed and the rest of the front-runners but many times even those moments ended in falls. He also had a fall in the first turn early on in the series that seemed to re-aggravate the back injury that put Weimer out of the 2010 outdoor championship. Things just weren't going well for Weimer at all.

"Really, I just wasn't super-confident in my riding and just the injuries... Aside from the arm it all started way before that and what was probably a bigger deal was my back from the year before. At the ending of outdoors last year in 2010, honestly that was definitely a bigger deal and was a lot scarier for me. So, with those things, I wasn't super-confident and I was struggling. I wasn't really that comfortable on the bike and was just having a tough time."

Weimer spent time concentrating just on his riding to try and improve things but never felt comfortable on the bike so he spent a lot of time testing too but things just weren't improving at all.

"I had approached it from both angles [improving himself and improving the bike]. I tried



The supercross season was a virtual write-off but Jake's all fired up for Vegas



Pre-season testing went well and Jake was only just off the pace of team-mate Ryan Villopoto



It was only when Jake was given the 2012 450 that he began to turn things around

to just say it is what it is – I need to get better, I need to fix myself. I tried that route and didn't really make much progress. I tried testing and doing that whole thing and changing the bike. It was definitely frustrating. I felt like I wasn't really making much progress. Midway through the Nationals it was definitely tough."

But at Unadilla, Kawasaki brought out the new 2012 KX450F and it was like he and his team-mate Villopoto were new men overnight. Villopoto went 1-1 for the first time in the series that day and Weimer was battling it out inside the top five in both motos until the very end.

"To me, it's pretty cut and dried. I was struggling, my confidence was down, I didn't feel comfortable. They gave me the opportunity to test the new 2012 bike. I got on it and immediately some of the things that I was struggling with were better and I liked the bike. Basically, the bike is better. When you've been struggling for so long and you get on something and it's better...it rejuvenated me because all of a sudden I could see the light at the end of the tunnel. I was having fun again.

"I think the first step was the bike was better and the second step was because the bike was better it kind of made things fun for me again. So everything kind of turned around. Still, at that point, the results were not what I wanted but by far

it was better than what I was doing. And I was actually going to the races and enjoying myself. It was definitely a turnaround."

Just in time, Weimer is feeling better about his riding, about his machine, about his competition and about his injuries – and now he's heading into his bread and butter, Supercross. Starting with the Monster Energy Cup in mid-October in Las Vegas where there's a million dollars on the line.

"I want to win again and I want to be competitive and be in the mix," Weimer says. "I don't want to be a fifth or sixth place guy. I don't want that. That's what I was. I was around there for a lot of the Nationals and I don't want to do that. With the new bike things have gotten better. I'm riding supercross now and I'm having a really good time. I'm enjoying it. I'm liking it. I'm motivated. I'm pushing every day. I want to get back in that mix and get back in that lead group.

"I'm motivated and I'm confident that I can do it. As of right now things are good. To me, I'm already feeling more confident than I was. I'm having a lot of fun. And I'm ready to go make a million bucks at Vegas."

That's what being happy and confident in your body, your team and your programme does for a racer – it makes him expect the best. Keep an eye on Jake Weimer...



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Was Brett Metcalfe racing for Australia at the MXdN or was he really representing Team AMA?

DIDN'T WE DO WELL!

AS HAPPY AS HE IS THAT TEAM USA WON THEIR SEVENTH STRAIGHT MXdN, OUR MAN STATESIDE KNOWS HE CAN'T TAKE ALL THE CREDIT FOR IT...

Words and photo by **Steve Cox**

Do you do this thing in the UK where people use the grand 'we' when talking about their favourite sports team? I bet you do. You probably have some favourite cricket team or rugby team or soccer (yes, soccer) team and you say things "we won!" or "we were robbed – that try was never a wicket".

But when you think about it, this is only slightly more weird than using the grand 'we' in reference to our country's sporting endeavours. How many medals did 'you' win in the Olympics? Probably zero. You were most likely watching the Olympics in your skivvies while eating ice cream.

But it's so engrained in sport that after Team USA won the Motocross des Nations there were quite a few people who congratulated me. Me! Like I did something. "Hey, Steve, congratulations. Your guys are really talented." My guys? I'm barely 10 years older than Ryan Villopoto so I can't be his dad.

What's this about? Truth be told, going to the Motocross des Nations is kind of a mixed bag for me. I'm happy to be there with the guys I work with all year long in the USA but

that's not just Team USA. This year at the MXdN it included Great Britain's Dean Wilson (and I'm quite fond of Tommy Searle, too, from his time in the States), Australia's Brett Metcalfe and Chad Reed, South Africa's Tyla Rattray (and Gareth Swanepoel races in the USA too although I haven't had as much time to get to know him) and all three of France's racers with Chris Pourcel and Marvin Musquin racing in the AMA in 2011 and Gautier Paulin spending time in the last couple years racing AMA SX.

I'm actually happy when any of these guys succeed, simply because I know them a fair bit. So it's weird when people automatically identify me with Team USA. It should be more like 'Team AMA'.

The other part of the experience that's tough for me is that, because I'm sort of tied to Team USA, I also end up feeling a bit of pressure relating to them. When they do well I feel like I have to be all nice and conciliatory, like, "well, your guys did well, too!" which may be true but it's all polite for politeness' sake and I hate that. And when they don't do that well I feel a need to avoid talking about why

because people see that as me making excuses. But it's not 'making excuses' to say that Team USA isn't used to that type of track and especially that type of track in the rain. That's just true.

When the day comes that Team USA loses I know I'll have people either trying to console me (unnecessary) or rubbing it in (unwanted). And why? Because I was born in the same country as the guys on that team? That just seems weird. What if they were complete assholes? I mean, none of them are on this year's team but I'm sure it has happened. I like Chad Reed a lot and Brett Metcalfe too and I'd love to see them win stuff. What if one of the Team USA guys was a complete jerk and Reed won? Should I be sad?

Americans are used to winning. We win at a lot of stuff. There are 300 million people here of all shapes, sizes and ethnic heritages. It's quite an advantage. But those of us with character still like to root for the underdogs.

Except for Germany. I don't think I can root for Germany.



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RACE OF THE YEAR?

IT GOES ALL THE WAY TO THE WIRE AT CULHAM IN THE 125cc FUCHS SILKOLENE BRITISH TWO-STROKE EXPERT CHAMPIONSHIP WHERE IAN ROXBURGH IS ON HAND TO PROVIDE A BLOW-BY-BLOW PHOTOGRAPHIC ACCOUNT...

Words by **Dick Law** Photos by **Ian Roxburgh**

We all love a screamer and the 125cc Fuchs Silkolene British Two-Stroke Expert Championship has produced some of the most exciting racing of the season. So it was fitting that the title went down to the wire with a winner-takes-all final race of the season...

Luke Remmer had it all his own way in race one as he got the holeshot and the win while Jon Pettitt had to fight his way from 11th before eventually slotting into second with seven laps gone. Going into race two, Remmer and Pettitt were on equal points and all eyes were on the pair as they powered past early race leader Fraser Viner for 11 laps of the closest racing.

The lead changed almost lap after lap. Going

into the last lap it was homeboy Pettitt from Remmer with Remmer crossing the line first, inches ahead of Pettitt! However, Remmer overtook under a waved yellow flag and was given a minute penalty that relegated him to second with the advantage going back to Pettitt for the final race.

The last race of the day has to be the highlight of the year. Remmer leads early on and he and Pettitt go at it tooth and nail, passing and re-passing, bumping and nudging and it looks like it will go on until the last corner. But it all goes wrong for Pettitt on the final lap when he hits the deck.

"It's been a great day's racing and we have been banging bars all day," says former GP racer

Pettitt. "There were so many people shouting and waving, it was amazing. But in the end I took all the free play out of my front brake lever before the weekend and I think it boiled and came on, throwing me over the bars. I got going again but it came on again and almost locked up and all I could do was get over the finish line."

So Remmer is crowned the 125 Expert champion and after a hard-fought season that's seen him miss the podium just twice in seven rounds he's all smiles.

"It's absolutely brilliant to be champion. Jon and I just gave it everything and left nothing on the table. After the penalty of the second race I just went for it and Jon had a bit of bad luck and I passed him for the win."



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LOCK, STOCK AND A TWO-SMOKIN' BARREL!

ANTONIO CAIROLI AND KEN ROCZEN ARE CROWNED EARLY IN GERMANY AND A SWEET-SOUNDIN', SWEET-SMELLIN' KTM STROKER SCORES POINTS IN ITALY...

Words by Suttty Photos by Ray Archer



Cairoli claims his fifth world title in seven seasons

When the GP circus packed up and left Matterley Basin at the end of August it was pretty obvious that Antonio Cairoli and Ken Roczen were on the verge of being crowned world champions. With only two GPs, four motos and 100 points left on the table it was unlikely their closest challengers Steven Frossard and Jeffrey Herlings would claw back the 82 and 43 points they were in arrears so it was more a matter of when rather than if

they'd wrap 'em up.

For Cairoli the clincher is lap eight of the very next moto in Gaildorf when Frossard drills himself into the ground and is in no fit state to finish the moto – or the rest of the series for that matter. So no matter what happens now the title is Cairoli's – his fifth in seven seasons! By chasing home runaway winner Christophe Pourcel in moto two Cairoli also takes the overall honours on the day with a 3-2 scorecard. The

Sicilian is joined on the podium by Evgeny Bobryshev (1-8) and Xavier Boog (2-6).

The Italian GP at Fermo ends the season and a hard-baked, hillside circuit awaits the riders – those that are still standing at least. Of the top 15 no fewer than six are non-starters and Max Nagl probably wishes he hadn't bothered as well after breaking his scaphoid in practice by over-jumping a huge tabletop.

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GEEK CHIC!

GP STATISTICS, RANDOM FACTS AND OUTRIGHT LIES...

On his way to taking the MX2 world title Ken Roczen led more laps than any other GP rider in 2011 – 364. Perhaps, not unsurprisingly, MX1 champ Antonio Cairoli is second in the 'lap leader' charts with 166 – almost 200 less than his KTM team-mate... Despite both classes having the same number and length of motos the MX1 riders completed one lap more over the entire season... The track with the shortest lap times was La Baneza in Spain while the longest was the USA's Glen Helen... Scariest Monster employee of the year award goes to the 15-second board 'girl' from Brazil – aye carumba... Only three riders won an MX2 GP while twice that amount won one or more in MX1 – four of those six 450 class winners achieved maximum points at one GP or more... Ray Archer and sidekick Adam Wheeler ate over 100 cakes during the course of the season – they were 'yummy'... On the way to their world titles Cairoli and Roczen both visited the podium 12 times out of 15... Eight different motorcycle manufacturers scored GP points in 2011... Three world champions lined up for the season opener in Seville but they were all MIA at the Fermo finale... By finishing fifth in race one at Fermo on a 125SX, Ken Roczen became the first two-stroke rider to grab GP points since Antoine Meo scored one single point at Faenza back in September '08... Gautier Paulin was the only rider to win an MX1 and MX2 moto in 2011, a feat last performed by Cairoli in 2007 – also on a Yamaha... The closest finish to a points-paying race this year has been a gap of 0.347 seconds and almost unbelievably has happened twice, once when Cairoli beat Frossard in race one at Kegums and also when Desalle beat Cairoli in moto one at Agueda... Matterley Basin was deemed by the riders as the best track of the year while the Spanish donkey trail La Baneza was generally regarded the worst... Max Anstie's race pants fell down more often than anyone else's and he was also the only racer to use the word penis in a press conference... On the subject of potty mouths Evgeny Bobryshev, Cairoli and Herlings all dropped the F-Bomb at least once live on TV... The FIM Motocross World Championship will be back next year...

It's an emotional title for Roczen



Cairoli's mourning the death of his mother and Frossard, Clement Desalle, Nagl, David Philippaerts, Ken De Dycker and Steve Ramon are all injured – the path is clear for some new blood to claim victory. And that new blood comes straight outta the MX2 class as Gautier Paulin dusts off DP19's race bike and blasts to the overall by running 1-2 in his 450 world championship debut.

Pourcel takes his third moto win of the year to claim second overall at the head of a four-way tie for second. With the better second race tie-breaker deciding the overall outcome the Frenchmen are joined by Spaniard Jon Barragan on the steps while Kevin Stribos and Xavier Boog share the runner-up points but not the champagne celebrations.

While some riders step up and shine, the last GP of the year is also littered with missed opportunities for others. Nagl only needs 34



Searle and Anstie put the squeeze on a stroker-mounted Roczen out of the gate in Italy



Paulin and Pourcel slug it out to be best of the French

points to snatch second from Frossard or 22 to take the bronze medal position from Desalle yet instead he slips from fourth to fifth in the standings as the pain proves too much for him to score even a single point. Bobryshev could also have snatched either the silver or bronze medal position but an off day sees him only score 19 points which allows him to steal fourth from a miffed Max but climb no further.

Brit battler Alfie Smith gets his MX1 points account up n' running with a fine 14th in race one at Fermo. Shaun Simpson has a solid end to his season too although bike problems in Italy mean he just fails to leapfrog Steve Ramon for 14th in the final championship standings. Tom Church's lengthy GP career comes to a close with 25th overall in Germany and 22nd in Italy to give him 35th for the year, one place behind Billy Mac but just ahead of Marty Barr in the final standings.

Down in the MX2 class Ken Roczen also has the opportunity to take the title on home soil at Gaildorf but he's gonna have to win both races and he needs someone to get between himself and Jeffrey Herlings to seal the deal. Race one kicks off on a heavily-watered, super-slick circuit making the first few laps a bit of a lottery as almost everyone makes a mistake or more.

Fortunately for K-Roc it's his team-mate who make the most errors allowing the super-keen Bavarian teen to take the race one win ahead of Tommy Searle, Arnaud Tonus, Gautier Paulin and Herlings who scrapes home fifth. If Roczen can beat Herlings again it's all over...

However, Herlings comes out swinging in race two and a nervous Roczen has his hands full with a charging Tommy Gun who's by far the fastest rider on the track. Searle swoops by the home boy like he's stood still and lines up Herlings to take the lead but because he's using racers' lines he ties himself in knots and lets Roczen back through. It's all exciting stuff made more so by the fact that if Herlings wins then the championship chase is going down to the last round and Kenny doesn't get to celebrate in front of his country folk.

The situation for the German turns from bad to worse midrace when he washes out on a camber and crashes hard letting Searle get back through. Now the only thing that can swing it is if Tommy motors past Herlings to take the win and gift Roczen the crown. And in a storybook end to the title chase that's exactly what happens, Tommy rides the wheels off his CLS Kawasaki to take the moto and overall win while Herlings trails home in second with new champ

>>

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An off day in Italy stops Bobryshev getting a series podium



Ken Roczen wheels out a 125cc stroker for the final round



Rui Goncalves ends the season in sixth in MX1



Roczen third. The celebrations are immense with Roczen really letting go and allowing his emotions to show.

With nothing to lose at the last GP of the year in Fermo, Roczen wheels out a 125cc two-smoker for what will probably be his only GP appearance as world champion before he goes to America in 2012 and beyond. The top four championship positions are settled, Roczen's uncompetitive on the oil-burner and Paulin steps up to MX1 prematurely so there's only really pride to race for and in a prequel to the epic Searle/Herlings battle we can expect next year Tommy and Jeffery go at it all day, winning a moto apiece with the Dutchman claiming the overall.

Max Anstie joins them on the podium for the first time in his career after running 4-4 on the day to finish sixth in the series standings just 22 points shy of BICWWY's Arnaud Tonus who ends the season fifth after finishing fourth overall in Germany and Italy – no podium for you this year, son.

Behind Anstie in the end-of-year classification are Nico Aubin, Zach Osborne (who's been out since Latvia), Harri Kullas, Joel Roelants and Jake Nicholls who misses out on a top 10 ranking by a meagre 24 points after missing the first four GPs altogether.

With an average haul per GP of just less than 21 points had Jake started the season at full strength and maintained that average all year long he'd have been seventh in the final standings. Good enough for seventh but still no factory ride – what's up with that?



British MX2 champ Arnaud Tonus takes fifth overall for the Bike It Cosworth Wild Wolf Yamaha team



Jeffrey Herlings hits the eject button in Italy

SERIES STANDINGS

MX1

1	Antonio Cairoli	Red Bull KTM	596
2	Steven Frossard	Yamaha Monster Energy	472
3	Clement Desalle	Rockstar Energy Suzuki	461
4	Evgeny Bobryshev	Honda World Motocross	444
5	Max Nagl	Red Bull KTM	439
6	Rui Goncalves	Honda World Motocross	431
7	Xavier Boog	Kawasaki Racing Team	347
8	Jon Barragan	Kawasaki Racing Team	326
9	David Philippaerts	Yamaha Monster Energy	308
10	Kevin Strijbos	Rockstar Energy Suzuki	295
15	Shaun Simpson	LS Motors Honda	222
26	Brad Anderson	PAR Honda	38
29	Jason Dougan	Bike It Cosworth Wild Wolf Yamaha	26
32	Tom Church	HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK	18
34	Gert Krestinov	LPE Kawasaki	15
36	Billy MacKenzie	LPE Kawasaki	14
38	Martin Barr	Boost Energy KTM	11
41	Alfie Smith	JK Datch Aprilia	7
47	Alex Snow	Lanes Kawasaki	4

MX2

1	Ken Roczen	Red Bull Teka KTM	651
2	Jeffrey Herlings	Red Bull Teka KTM	632
3	Tommy Searle	Monster Energy CLS Kawasaki	573
4	Gautier Paulin	Yamaha Monster Energy	458
5	Arnaud Tonus	Bike It Cosworth Wild Wolf Yamaha	427
6	Max Anstie	Monster Energy CLS Kawasaki	405
7	Nico Aubin	HDI KTM	304
8	Zach Osborne	Bike It Cosworth Wild Wolf Yamaha	295
9	Harri Kullas	Monster Yamaha Garibaldi	287
10	Joel Roelants	JM Racing KTM	253
11	Jake Nicholls	HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK	229
30	Elliott Banks-Browne	DB Racing Honda	23
48	Jordan Booker	HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK	5
59	Lewis Tombs	MVR-D Honda	1



DIRTY RASCALS!

THE VETS MXdN BRINGS TOGETHER A CLASSIC COLLECTION OF RIDERS OLD AND NEW – AS WELL AS A KING OF THE CASTLE OR TWO – FOR A RAUCOUS RACE-A-THON AT FANTASTIC FARLEIGH...

Words and photos by **Sutty**

Farleigh Castle holds a lot of memories for a lot of people and if the third annual Vets MXdN is anything to go by it's gonna create a lot more before it's finished n'all. With over 500 racers and 10,000 fans rocking up to the iconic grassland circuit for this year's get together there's a whole lotta cider drinking, bench racing and bike coveting going on plus a little bit of racing too.

Love it or hate it there's no denying that evo racing is on the up and up. For every negative nancy that says 'the bike's were crap back then, why would I want to race one now I'm 20-odd years older and five stone heavier' it seems like there are five nostalgia-blinded masochists who'll completely disagree and pay a king's ransom to get their hands on something that's certainly not the

latest and probably never was the greatest.

And I can't say I blame them – the racing is generally good, the banter is better and who cares if you can't walk properly all week afterwards because those four 10-minute motos took it out of your knackered old limbs. That's not to say the evo scene only attracts old fogers – the age range of riders at Farleigh starts at 15.

Regardless of age, the 2011 edition of the Vets MXdN has an awesome entry list and even though Stefan Everts and Mickael Pichon are both injured in the week leading up to the event it's still stacked out with champions from '79 500cc world champ Graham Noyce through to fellow FIM gold gongers Neil Hudson, Dave Thorpe and Jamie Dobb.

>>



*American superstar
Jeff Stanton turns back
the clock at Farleigh*

UNDER 40 TWINSHOCK

While former DBR tester Ross Sturmev might have missed out on a medal in the Four-stroke division our current bike abuser Edmund B Radley scores gold in the Under-40 twinshock division aka the cougar class – that's young men riding old bikes.

The Edmaster runs 2-3-2-2 to claim gold although he's out shone in individual motos by the gorgeous Alex Rach and J-Mizzle from Brizzle who both win a pair of motos apiece but pick up DNFs along the way. With Rachy and May finishing way down the final classification due to their mechanical issues, Ed is joined on the podium by Matthew Porter and Luke Hill.

RESULTS

- 1 Ed Bradley
- 2 Matt Porter
- 3 Luke Hill
- 4 Kristian Marshall
- 5 Ashley Hudson
- 6 Daniel Hiorns

Alex Rach leads
Ed Bradley



French visitor Regis Simon



On top of those golden oldies, AMA legends Jeff Stanton, Chuck Sun, Scott Burnworth and Jim Gibson are also in attendance then there's the home-grown beauties (and beasties) like Tom Church, Mark Eastwood, Neil Prince, Brad Anderson, Gordon Everhard, Kristian Whatley, Rikki Priest and Dave Watson. When did you last see a line-up like that?

The big race of the weekend – the one the whole event is named after – is the Vets MXdN. Teams of four riders from 12 nations battle it out for the Magoo trophy. With each team's top three scores from each of the four motos counting towards the overall result there's not a lot of room for error and with over 50 bikes on the track at any one time almost anything can happen.

In moto one it's 2001 125cc world champ Dobb who takes the holeshot on his 490 Maico with Prince, Vet World Cup champion Pascal Bal and Stanton right there in his wheel tracks. But try as he might Dobb doesn't hold the lead for long as Prince takes over at the front with Stanton and Belgium's Werner Dewit both chasing hard.

On the second lap Dewit leaps from third to first, dragging Maico-mounted Mark Eastwood with him as Stanton slips back to third but at the same time pulls clear of Prince and Dobb. While

the front three won't change positions for the rest of the moto there's plenty happening back in the pack as multi-AMCA champ Rick Du-Feu charges from outside the top 20 to fourth as the chequered flag is unfurled.

Race two sees another North West AMCA legend take the holeshot as Preston builder Gary Parker yanks a fast one on his four-stroke Honda. But again it's Dewit and Eastwood who battle to the front with the Englishman taking the lead from Dewit on lap two as Stanton and Jan Blancquert battle it out for fourth.

It all changes on tour five though as Eastwood's Maico breaks allowing the two Belgian Suzuki riders to lead the way. Stanton meanwhile yields to Du-Feu and Twinshock UK team-mate Wayne Butt who have both ricocheted through the pack from outside the top 15. And that's how it ends – Dewit wins ahead of Blancquert, Du-Feu, Butt, Stanton and Dobb.

Dewit takes another win in moto three – this time in dominant fashion. After yanking the holeshot the short Belgian keeps the lead throughout although Eastwood chases hard to the finish. Stanton has his best result of the weekend to finish third ahead of Edmont Natterman, Dobb and Butt who has a reversal of fortunes this time around, starting strong and fading back.



Sam Chapman and his Jared Smith replica

EVO 250

What a shame this class only gets to run one moto on Saturday as it means the crowd miss out on a second epic duel between three of today's best MX1 class riders on machinery from yesteryear.

In the one moto the fans do get to enjoy on Saturday it's Kristian Whatley who grabs the holeshot on his aging Yamahauler although J-Mizzle from Brizzle – aka John May – leads by the end of the lap. As May makes a break for it, Whatley slips back into the clutches of Brad Anderson and Gordon Crockard – who sets the fastest lap time of the whole weekend during this race – and the three of them battle it out for second allowing May to sneak away to take his first win of four over the weekend. Crockard fights through to the runner-up spot while Ando's third and Whatley – on his by now sickly sounding Yam – fourth.

With the three current stars racing elsewhere the following day and J-Mizzle still dominating, the lower podium positions are up for grabs. Ben Millward runs 5-2-2-4 over the weekend to claim second overall while Lewis Abbott claims the bronze medal position with a 7-3-3-2.

RESULTS

- 1 John May
- 2 Ben Millward
- 3 Lewis Abbott
- 4 Richard Chinn
- 5 Stuart Rawlings
- 6 Mark McGill



Jan Geboers tops the Over 50 twinshock division

OVER 50 TWINSHOCK

Won in fine style by Belgian Suzuki rider Jan Geboers, the biggest cheers come for '79 world champ Graham Noyce who battles it out all weekend to take fifth overall in a class packed with faces, industry bods and two of the team responsible for making this event happen – Dave King and Chris Stone.

While Chris beats Dave in the on-track battle of the promoters, Geboers takes the overall the Belgian way – without winning a moto, fnar – to edge out Chris Bryan and Nick Toms for the top step of the podium. Moto two victor Kranky Ken Hanson snatches fourth from under the nose of Rolls Noyce who's fifth.

Other notable names in the results include 'elder statesman' Chris Elderfield in eighth, Mike Church 14th, Wulfsport's Bill Brown 17th, Dave Watson 21st (he missed Saturday due to work commitments but kicked ass in both of Sunday's races) and CI Sport's Stuart Miller who's an unlucky 39th after only scoring once all weekend!

RESULTS

- 1 Jan Geboers
- 2 Chris Bryan
- 3 Nick Toms
- 4 Keith Hanson
- 5 Graham Noyce
- 6 Martin Stokes

250 Evo runner Dave Lopez



**Tommy Crunch leads
Scott Elderfield and Alfie
Smith past a back-marker**

EVO 500

The battle of the big-bores boils down to a last moto scrap between Alfie Smith and Scott Elderfield after Saturday's double winner Tom Church loses the chain off his Honda in race three and is dumped out of the hunt for the overall. Smith and Elderfield sit level on points after that decisive – for TC at least – moto so whoever comes out on top in race four will come away with the bragging rights.

TC yanks the holey with Ryan Voase in tow but both Smith and Elderfield are inside the top six as the pack blast out of the first turn. TC slips off on lap one allowing Smith to move into the lead as Elderfield blows by Voase to set up a thrilling finale but Alfie's not having any of it. Finally armed with a competitive bike, the factory Aprilia star – who's out this weekend on a '88 KX500 – slips away from the pack to amass a massive 18-second lead by the time the chequers is unfurled. Eldy just holds Voase at bay while TC makes his way back to fourth.

Overall Smith takes the win ahead of Elderfield, Cumbrian farmer Paul Coward, Maxxis up n' comer Sam Chapman and 1981 250cc world champ Neil Hudson who has the pleasure of riding the ally-framed YZM500 that features heavily in this month's Burnicle's Beat. Check it out on page 66 for a history lesson you won't forget...

RESULTS

- 1 **Alfie Smith**
- 2 **Scott Elderfield**
- 3 **Paul Coward**
- 4 **Sam Chapman**
- 5 **Neil Hudson**
- 6 **Jason Fraser**



**Greg Hanson
heads Phil Mercer**

VETS MODERN

The exact opposite of the 'cougar class', the Vets modern pitches old men into to battle on brand new bikes. World cup runner-up Phil Mercer runs 2-2-1-1 to edge out Greg Hanson for the win over the weekend in four superb battles that although hard-fought somehow lack the intensity and interest of the Evo and twinshock races.

After winning the opener Mark Eastwood decides to pull out and concentrate on the VMXdN class leaving the way clear for Davey Campbell to join Hanson and Mercer on the podium.

RESULTS

- 1 **Phil Mercer**
- 2 **Greg Hanson**
- 3 **David Campbell**
- 4 **Matt Gordon**
- 5 **Steve Elford**
- 6 **Gary Chappell**



J-Mizzle from Brizzle



**World 250cc champ back
in 1981, Neil Hudson races
the super-exotic YZM500**

PHOTOGRAPH BY



Pre-83 125cc rider Bruno David

PRE-83 125 FRANCE vs ENGLAND

Part two of an Anglo-Francais double header, the Pre-83 125 class has Farleigh Castle buzzing – literally – as over 40 highly-tuned 125 two-strokes and one lone vintage 250F battle it out on the hallowed turf.

The French come to Farleigh with a 48-point lead after the opening battle in Belleme earlier this year but the English are on fine form on home soil. Lance Marshall claims the overall win with a 2-4-1-1 scorecard ahead of Richard Chinn and Marv Musquin's older brother Michael who tie for second overall. Chinn takes the silver medal courtesy of his final race third compared to Musquin's sixth. Fast Frenchies Regis Simon and Christopher Leray round out the top five ahead day one moto winners Kevin Ruddock and Alix Foreman who pick up a DNF apiece to keep them from challenging for the podium positions.

In the team event the English boys take it by the proverbial country mile – well done lads! To spice things up in 2012 it's expected the series will also include rounds in other European countries becoming something similar to the five nations rugby bash, only without the odd-shaped balls...

RESULTS

- 1 Lance Marshall
- 2 Richard Chinn
- 3 Michael Musquin
- 4 Regis Simon
- 5 Christopher Leray
- 6 Stevie Ruddock



Over 40s action with Howard Standfield

OVER 40 TWINSHOCK

Although lacking in star names the Over 40 twinshock class isn't lacking in action. Keith Rice dominates all four motos on his 500 Honda to take the overall ahead of Simon Hart, Tim Carter, Chris Woodward and MotoXtreme supremo Alan Brown.

RESULTS

- 1 Keith Rice
- 2 Simon Hart
- 3 Tim Carter
- 4 Chris Woodward
- 5 Alan Brown
- 6 Martin Small



Philip Ryan and Michael Paulussen go elbow to elbow



Swift Swede Andreas Beltin



US ace Jim Gibson



Race four's a strange 'un too as Eastwood and Dewit once more battle for the lead with Eastwood coming out on top this time around. Werner holds on to a safe second with David Campbell motoring through the pack to finish third for Scotland. Du-Feu ends up fourth and Butt fifth after Spud Wheeler gets sensationally disqualified for cutting the course – cowpietastic!

In the team comp the Twinshock UK boys win the Magoo trophy reasonably easily with Du-Feu, Butt and Parker all finishing in the top 10 overall in the individual rankings with fourth member Russell Watson – no, not the tenor – also running strong in 15th overall.

The JMB Belgium squad snatch second overall with their highest placed rider being Blancquert in sixth. He's backed up by Natterman, Didier Stommen and Bal who despite not doing too well individually kept things together as a team.

Taking the third step on the podium is the American dream team of Stanton, Scott Burnworth, Chuck Sun and Jim Gibson who edge out the English team of Welshman Prince, Wheeler, Dobb and Eastwood by a meagre three points. But that's okay because it wouldn't be an MXdN if our boys didn't just miss out on the podium now would it?

RESULTS TEAM

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----|
| 1 | Twinshock UK | 87 |
| 2 | JMB Belgium | 122 |
| 3 | USA | 128 |
| 4 | England | 131 |
| 5 | Scotland | 213 |
| 6 | Geboers Belgium | 234 |

RESULTS INDIVIDUAL

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1 | Werner DeWit |
| 2 | Richard Du-Feu |
| 3 | Wayne Butt |
| 4 | Jeff Stanton |
| 5 | David Campbell |
| 6 | Jan Blancquert |



Former world champ Jamie Dobb turns back the clock 10 years after he won his 125cc title

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Stevie Ruddock

125 EVO

Former GP runner Rikki Priest dominates the 125cc Evo class on his white Suzuki which may or may not be class legal depending on who you talk to. Whatever, the full-time MX Coach schools the competition in all four motos to beat home young gun Bradley Wheeler who's out doing the business on a sweet-lookin' Chesterfield replica KTM – mmmm, Trampas Parkery.

Behind the leading pair things are a wee bit wild and Christian McGill ends up taking third overall with a 10-7-7-6 scorecard – the one for a win, two for second scoring system playing havoc with the overall scores of anyone hitting trouble in a race or more. Kawasaki-mounted Benjamin Haggerty is probably the biggest victim of that scoring system in the 125 Evo class as a race two DNF wipes out his two thirds and a fourth meaning he only finishes 10th overall. Bad times Benji!

RESULTS

- 1 Rikki Priest
- 2 Bradley Wheeler
- 3 Christian McGill
- 4 Lee Chiswell
- 5 Jonathan Cole
- 6 Paul Owen



Burn on Byrnie! Suttty's old sparring partner Kevin Byrne gets on the gas



Kevin Reed gets a bit of whiskey throttle

FOUR-STROKE TWINSHOCK AND PRE-85

A mixed class but scored separately, the thumpers and pre-85s battle it out for four motos over the weekend with the slightly more modern bikes seemingly having the edge over the older four-poppers, taking three of the four wins.

In the Pre-85 class Carl Pope takes a popular win on his air-cooled CR500 as he runs 1-1-2-2 in class to beat Jim Shand who radically improves on the second day. Ian Pratt and James Reeves tie for third overall with Pratt's last moto third sealing the final podium position as Reeves has his worst race of the weekend and only manages fifth by the finish.

Daniel Hiorns dominates the four-stroke division with four class wins (and 4-2-1-3 in the mixed classification) to take the top step ahead of Kranky Ken and Jem Parker on an immaculately prepped HPF Honda. Former DBR test loon Ross Sturmey misses out on a podium after a DNF on his ratty-looking but seriously sweet Yamaha negates his run of 2-8-2 results – better luck next time The Sturminator.

RESULTS PRE-85

- 1 Carl Pope
- 2 James Shand
- 3 Ian Pratt
- 4 James Reeves
- 5 James Bartholomew
- 6 Rob Foden

RESULTS FOUR-STROKE

- 1 Daniel Hiorns
- 2 Ken Hanson
- 3 Jem Parker
- 4 Matt Thomas
- 5 Simon Doughty
- 6 Dom Durkin



Mark Eastwood gets on the gas



Current star Kristian Whatley

Antonio Meo sews up the coveted E2 championship with one round remaining



SERIES STANDINGS

ENDURO 1

1	Juha Salminen	311
2	Eero Remes	287
3	Matti Seistola	275
4	Rodrig Thain	247
5	Lorenzo Santolino	206

ENDURO 2

1	Antoine Meo	319
2	Cristobal Guerrero	268
3	Ivan Cervantes	258
4	Pela Renet	240
5	Antoine Basset	200

ENDURO 3

1	Mika Ahola	319
2	Christophe Nambotin	296
3	Joakim Ljunggren	262
4	Marko Tarkkala	226
5	Oriol Mena	210

ENDURO JUNIOR

1	Jeremy Joly	283
2	Mario Roman	279
3	Romain Dumontier	229
4	Mathias Bellino	222
5	Jonathan Manzi	215

MOUNTAIN GOAT?

OKAY, SO HE MAY NOT BE THE GREATEST OF ALL TIME – YET – BUT HIGH UP IN THE PYRENEES ANTOINE MEO'S CELEBRATING LIFTING THE BLUE RIBBON ENDURO 2 CROWN WITH ONE EVENT STILL TO RUN...

Words and photos by Jonty Edmunds

If there's one thing all teams enjoy it's the sweet taste of success. And at the Enduro World Championship's GP of Andorra it's French ace Antoine Meo and his Husqvarna CH Racing Monster Energy team who are the ones doing the celebrating.

Wrapping up the coveted Enduro 2 title with one event in hand, Meo secures his second EWC title in as many years. Dominating the blue ribbon class at the first time of asking, Meo ends the championship's penultimate event with a 1-3 scorecard and as the only rider inside the top four of the class to have finished every day.

"It would have been better if some of the other riders didn't have bike problems but finishing races is what enduro is all about," offers Antoine. "There was a lot of people talking about the battle I'd have with Johnny Aubert but that never happened which is disappointing. But winning the E2 title is amazing. It's what everyone in the team has worked for."

Topping the E2 class on day one following an all-out attack on Ivan Cervantes' lead during the final test of the day, Meo leapfrogs his Spanish rival to claim what is arguably his most important day win of the season. Not needing to win on day two to secure the championship, Meo places a close third despite easing his pace towards the end of the day and doing exactly what he needs to in order to put the E2 championship out of the reach of all other riders.

"I wasn't riding great at the start of the first day," explains Antoine, "but I felt better and better as the day progressed. I decided to go for it on the last test – if I crashed I crashed, if not I knew I could win. That made it possible to win the title on the second day. I knew the title was mine on day two if I didn't crash. It feels so good to have won the title."

While Meo's weekend in Andorra goes exactly to plan, for his team-mate Juha

Salminen things don't quite go so smoothly. In a mathematical position to claim the Enduro 1 title, Juha's opening day ends prematurely as a mechanical problem sidelines him. Thankfully for the seven-time world champion things go well on day two and he takes the win but with just two days of competition remaining Juha knows that he can ill-afford any more problems.

"It's disappointing but it can happen in motorsport," is Juha's philosophical response to the loss of potentially 25 championship points. "Sure it means we can't have any more problems but I'm not worrying too much yet. What can I do? I just have to ride my best and hope everything goes okay at the last race."

Away from the mixed fortunes inside the Husqvarna team, KTM and Honda are the manufacturers who enjoy the most success. With Salminen failing to go the distance on day one Eero Remes carries on where he left off at the ISDE in Finland and tops E1. French Honda rider Rodrig Thain makes the pint-sized Finn work hard for his win while Matti Seistola ends up third after failing to get to grips with the enduro test.

Salminen returns to his winning ways on day two, deflating Remes' confidence in the process. But in managing to place as runner-up the KTM rider keeps himself in a position to strike should Juha run into any further trouble.

Cervantes places second in the Enduro 2 class on both days, finishing agonisingly close to the top step of the podium. With Meo kicking him down a place on day one, on day two it's countryman Cristobal Guerrero who does the winning. The lone KTM rider after Johnny Aubert's departure from the series following his crash in Greece, Guerrero just edges ahead of Cervantes who almost claims his first wins of the series.

"I thought I could win on the first day," explains Ivan. "I felt good and was ahead of Meo but the day was so short, just 30

minutes of special tests. I was ahead before the final test but it didn't work out. The second day was even closer. Cristobal rode really well but I made a few small mistakes and that was enough to give him the win."

The Enduro 3 class sees the tightest racing of the event with championship leader Mika Ahola and his closest rival Christophe Nambotin sharing top honours. Day one goes to Ahola but with six seconds separating the top three it's more a case of who makes the least mistakes rather than who's the out and out fastest rider.

Doing what he's done so many times before in recent years, Mika holds his nerve while a silly but potentially serious crash from Nambotin sees the Frenchman smash his bike up but luckily not himself. With Nambotin losing a few precious seconds Husaberg's Joakim Ljunggren gets himself in on the action and by placing as runner-up is delighted with his performance.

On day two it's Mika's turn to get things not quite right as again just six seconds separate the top three riders. Ljunggren, riding confidently following his runner-up result on day one, goes after class leader Nambotin but falls agonisingly short of picking up his first win of the year. Just one second away from winning, the day ends with Nambotin, Ljunggren and Ahola as the deserved top three.

The only rider in the event able to put some daylight between himself and his podium rivals is Enduro Junior title challenger Mario Roman from Spain. Closing in on class leader Jeremy Joly, Mario's double class win sees him top the result sheets by close to 30 seconds on each day. And with Joly managing just one podium finish the difference at the top of the standings is reduced to just four points setting up a France versus Spain, Honda versus KTM showdown at the final event of the series



Former GP MX racer
Rodrig Thain holds
fourth in E1



Cristobal Guerrero takes
the E2 day two win
in Andorra

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RED BULL SERIES SIGNS OFF

THE FAB FOUR!

BYMX CHAMPIONS CROWNED



The 65cc class blast out the gate at the penultimate round in Ireland



Jammin' Jay Hague ends the season third best SW85cc



Zander Brown tops the 65cc division on his Moto One KTM



SW champ Sid Evans

FINAL STANDINGS

65cc

1 Alexander Brown 1439, 2 Jed Etchells 1373, 3 Dylan Woodcock 1186, 4 Harry Kimber 1097, 5 Tom Grimshaw 998, 6 Oliver Costerdine 972

SW85cc

1 Sid Evans 1317, 2 Jordan Eccles 1261, 3 Jay Hague 1166, 4 William Keogh 1149, 5 Taylor Hammal 1055, 6 Mitchell Lewis 946

BW85cc

1 Ben Watson 1317, 2 Rob Davidson 1221, 3 Tom Neal 1088, 4 Matthew Callaghan 1048, 5 Nathan Dixon 843, 6 Fraser Viner 789

ROOKIES

1 Nathan Watson 1349, 2 Jake Millward 1169, 3 Jamie McCanney 1064, 4 James Dunn 1005, 5 Tommy Alba 983, 6 Liam Garland 861

CULHAM CLIMAX!

RED BULL ELITE YOUTH CUP SIGNS OFF...

Going into the spectacular MCF Culham party weekend, Zander Brown holds a comfy lead in the 65s and super Sid Evans has an even better advantage in the smallies as the 2011 Red Bull Elite Youth Cup series comes to a climax.

Higher up the batting order Ben Watson already has his BW85cc silverware fully wrapped from the previous round and big brother Nathan's Rookie task is made all the easier with main challenger Jamie McCanney still out nursing a tricky shoulder problem.

Rage stated back in July that whoever triumphed in the MCF Juniors section would well and truly deserve the title of 'Britain's best' and that conclusively goes to Brown who completes his weekend five-from-five rout in cavalier style. The champion's red plate is already in place after race four and he wins heat five from the back when all looks lost.

Jed Etchells is the season-long speedy bridesmaid and he takes weekend and series silver with yet another gutsy show. Among an impressive end-of-season 36-strong line-up, Harry Kimber nails third overall matching Etchells with a brace of second place finishes.

In the SW85cc ranks there are three storming

race wins for the very much in-form Will Keogh and that's enough for the overall win. The other two heat wins go the way of Jay Hague and Jordan Eccles with Jordan, who's riding with a cracked pelvis, putting in one of his best performances of the year going 3-2-2-2-1 to claim second overall.

Taylor Hammal in his rookie smallies campaign impresses again with third as David Keet battles away hard for a season's best fourth-placed finish. In the title stakes Evans is plagued by mechanical issues and suffers his worst result of the year finishing in ninth overall but collects enough points to lift the crown following race three. With Hague having to retire from the meeting after his 2-1 start, Eccles snatches the division runner-up berth relegating Hague to bronze.

With Ben Watson already crowned EYC BW85cc champ he takes his swashbuckling talent off to Holland, keeping his ONK championship hopes well alive with a stirring 2-2 at the penultimate Markelo round. Back in Oxfordshire however it's all about the second and third-placed riders in the series – Rob Davidson and Tom Neal.

Fraser Viner had moved up to 125s and

Davidson claims three of the heat wins with a powerful show. In a return to top form, Neal secures the other two wins as the pair dominate proceedings. Matty Callaghan takes third overall with a single second place finish as his best return. In another well represented section there are over 30 on the startline and it's Jordan Bachelor, Jack Gardner and Todd Kellett who round out the top six.

Very reminiscent of 2009 and making it a family Red Bull double once again, Nathan Watson has his arm raised as Rookies series champion following his second Saturday race win. Watson goes on to further glory in races three and four but has to settle for second behind an electrified Liam Garland in the final moto of the year.

Garland ends his season with a 2-1 following a disappointing Saturday show. The individual second place finishes get shared between Damon Brooks, James Dunn and Shaun Springer. Tommy Alba also catches the eye on day one with a pair of third places, as does Jake Millward on day two. And Millward ends his season on a high as he elevates himself to the championship runner-up position, nudging out the absent and unfortunate McCanney.

THE FAB FOUR!

BYMX CHAMPIONS CROWNED AT MILTON PARK

Congratulations go to Alexander Brown (65cc), Conrad Mewse (SW85cc), Jack Gardner (BW85cc) and Nathan Watson (Open) – this year's fab four BYMX champions.

Both Brown (Moto One KTM) and Mewse (Frampton's KTM) cruise imperiously to their title success at Milton Park, winning a glorious five races apiece. Harry Kimber on the Twisted 7 Kwacka also catches the eye in the Juniors, as does Will Keogh in the smallies.

Following a superb high-flying 2-2-2 day one effort, Kimber's challenge unfortunately stalls on day two with a pair of 12ths but Keogh (3-2-2-6-2) carries on hustling to finish as the round seven SW runner up. Making a name for himself late in the day, Keogh would certainly have challenged strongly for the series silver if he had not missed the opening rounds.

High on confidence having just won the BSMA BW crown along with the GT Cup award – main prize a holiday in Tenerife – Jack Gardner on the MX World thumper goes down in the record books as an impressive four-time race winner at the ACU Milton Park finale. Having said that, HM Plant Red Bull KTM flier Ben Watson – a non-championship rider – actually crosses the line first on three occasions. But take nothing away from Gardner – his mental approach, back-up and race prep are spot on and he conclusively wins the spoils just as unlucky Liam Knight's hopes of glory end on a niggling mechanical note.

Brad Todd, the third of the championship contenders, hauls his talent around more efficiently on day two and he nails the final biggies race of the year. Todd finishes as the weekend and series runner-up but under a different scoring system he gleefully walks off with the heaviest sack of Honda

goodies as their Xtreme series number one.

Having picked up a shoulder injury at the Italian worlds, Manx hardman Jamie McCanney is a massive miss at the series closer. The 17-year-old was bang on for a real tilt at the crown but on the day all bets are now focused on Nathan Watson and Adam Sterry.

Joint first in the standings, as the show gets under way ACU Academy man James Harrison on the Twisted 7 machine hits top form and takes first blood with Watson on the HM Plant Red Bull KTM second and Sterry third.

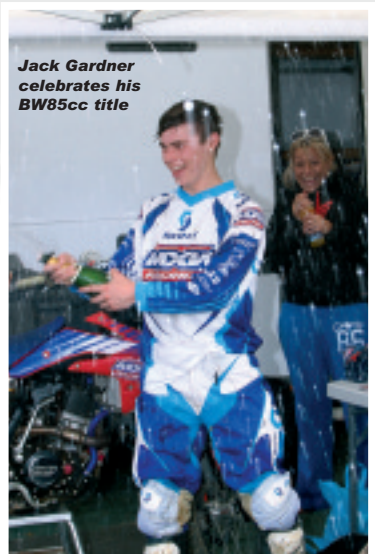
RMJ Academy Evo Tech Honda star Sterry then regains the title initiative with a brace of accomplished and confident heat wins. Overnight Sterry leads by 10 points and he then finishes second in the Sunday opener as Watson forcefully takes the win.

Going into the final roll of the dice just seven points are the difference but even the Watson KTM camp have Sterry marked down as champion. As the gate drops however a tense and nervy affair begins to play out with Watson is in sixth and Sterry down in ninth as Harrison once again heads the field.

With five laps remaining Watson makes the most of his energy and experience and smoothly moves into the lead but Sterry finds himself having to battle much harder in the wheel tracks of third-placed Jake Millward. Sterry desperately needs to make the pass to be champion but with Milly in great form it's absolutely no gimme.

But the grandstand finish that everyone wants and the series deserves is cruelly cut short when Sterry takes a hit from a back-marker which leaves him on the sidelines with a busted up front brake, a suspected broken finger and his title effort in shreds.

Jack Gardner celebrates his BW85cc title



FINAL STANDINGS

65cc

1 Alexander Brown 338, 2 Jed Etchells 302, 3 Callum Meara 277, 4 Adam Dunn 244, 5 Colin Scott 243, 6 Harry Kimber 238

SW85cc

1 Conrad Mewse 344, 2 Jay Hague 291, 3 Taylor Hammal 243, 4 Jordan Eccles 242, 5 David Keet 240, 6 Aaron Piper 234

BW85cc

1 Jack Gardner 287, 2 Brad Todd 287, 3 Liam Knight 276, 4 Matthew Callaghan 250, 5 Rob Davidson 246, 6 Stuart Fee 229

OPEN

1 Nathan Watson 306, 2 Adam Sterry 294, 3 Jamie McCanney 252, 4 Jake Millward 250, 5 Scott Hamilton 229, 6 Damon Brooks 228



SW champ Conrad Mewse gets the drop on Taylor Hammal

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The four-race British Auto Championship on the opening day of the ACU Milton Park schoolie finale sees 22 of the country's finest on the startline. They are never really meant to steal the show but in many people's eyes they absolutely do!

It's an end-of-season showcase for the one-levered gang and they duly set the place alight with a speedy and uplifting show of unbridled competitive enthusiasm. It all goes off on a not too challenging dry and shortened circuit and if this is in any way a test of their suitability for inclusion in the 2012 BYMX championship programme the little fellas pass with flying colours.

As the newly-crowned double BSMA Auto champ, James Hyett has enjoyed the lion's share of wins this term and he starts the event as a clear favourite. In qualification however little Louie Kessell runs fastest closely followed by Hyett with Ike Carter in third. Barely a hair's breath exists between the leading trio and Dylan Woodhall leads a similarly close second wave of attack just a couple of seconds adrift.

In the opening heat of the day Kessell grabs the holeshot but finds himself relegated to third at the flag as Carter nails a powerful win followed by Woodhall in second. Cutting his way through the pack impressively, Hyett posts the fastest lap time more than two seconds clear but a loose spark plug results in a tough luck eighth-placed finish.

Second time around with the wind of confidence in his sails Carter lays down another fast and furious heat win. It's the best finish of the day as Hyett tigerishly applies the pressure all the way to the chequers. Woodhall and Kessell come home in third and fourth and the tasty quartet are dominant.

Heat three proves to be absolutely pivotal. With a disastrous 10th place, Carter is effectively out of the running and so too is Hyett in sixth. Buster Hart and Sam Davis crowbar their way in, claiming third and fourth place finishes but with a supercharged fastest lap Kessell takes the win from Woodhall.

Heat four is a winner-takes-all decider. Woodhall on 124 holds a single-point advantage but no-nerves Kessell takes immediate command with yet another determined holey. As dads sprint from one corner to another Woodhall tries all ways for six gritty laps to wrestle the crown from Kessell's grasp but the Cornish flier holds firm to claim the title.

After making a slight error in the closing laps, Woodhall eventually drops to fourth as Hart and Davis thunder through again for second and third place finishes.

BRITISH AUTO CHAMPIONSHIP

RESULTS

1	Louie Kessell	168
2	Dylan Woodall	162
3	Ike Carter	157
4	Buster Hart	153
5	Sam Davis	149
6	James Hyett	144



Louie Kessell leads the pack on his way to the title



Ike Carter (#17), Kessell, James Hyett (#35) and Dylan Woodhall (#77) dominate proceedings



Carter ends the day in third

GOT A STORY FOR RAGE?

THEN CONTACT OUR YOUTH EDITOR MIKE GURNEY AT MIKEGURNEY55@YAHOO.CO.UK



Ben Watson has swept all before him this season in the Red Bull Elite Youth Cup

DOMINATION!

BEN WATSON HAS BEEN A STAND-OUT STAR OF THIS YEAR'S RED BULL ELITE YOUTH CUP...

After one of the most dominant performances we've seen this season, HM Plant Red Bull KTM's Ben Watson wrapped up the Big Wheel 85cc championship with a round to spare. We interrupted him as he was doing his homework to find out his thoughts on the season...

Rage: This year you've taken five from six overalls, three of them being clean sweeps. Sum up how good this season has been from your perspective?

BW: "I've just gone out and tried to win every overall that I can. The one that I didn't win I still managed to tie on points so I still think that was pretty good."

Rage: Which has been your favourite round this year?

BW: "FatCat was my favourite because I really like the sand but I think the one that I did best at was probably Hawkstone where I won one race by a minute and one second – the weekend was really easy."

Rage: Consistency is the name of the game in landing any championship and after problems

last year this time around you've managed to finish 30 out of 30 motos...

BW: "Last year it was never really me that had problems – it was more bike failures – so this year I've had some different tuners and the bike's stayed together really well."

Rage: How much work does your dad put into keeping your bike together?

BW: "He's constantly in the garage working late hours or he'll be out at a tuner's or something like that, just making sure that everything is right within the engine. He's working harder now than he ever has because he knows that mine or Nathan's bikes can't go wrong or it could ruin the championships for us."

Rage: You're in year 10 at school – how difficult do you find it to keep on top of your school work as well as trying to carve out a successful motocross career?

BW: "School don't actually hand out that much homework which is lucky. When I'm there they will sometimes let me have time off to do a few days riding or something like that or if I have to go to a big meeting on a Friday they'll let me go early."

Rage: You're going to try to get some decent academic results from school then?

BW: "Yeah, I'm always scoring average in school so I'll try to keep it that way and see how it goes."

Rage: Is the plan to move up into the Rookies next season?

BW: "Yeah, if I do the Elite series next year it will be in the Rookies either on the 125cc or it might even be the 250F so that should be fun!"

Rage: So is that it, have you finished with the big wheel bike now?

BW: "I've actually got three more races left on the BW – one is Weston and two are the ONKs in Holland. After that it will be training on the 125 and 250."

Rage: So if you and your big brother Nathan went head-to-head on a sand track do you think you'd give him a whuppin' or is his age still a big advantage for him?

BW: "Hmmm, I'm not sure really! I think I'd have to have another year on a 250, get a little bit of training done and then we should 'ave it!"

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WHOOOP MONSTER!

BILLY'S BACK DOWN UNDER AND HE'LL BE THERE FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER YEAR BUT BEFORE THE OUTDOOR SEASON KICKS OFF THERE'S SOME SERIOUS SUPERCROSS TO PREPARE FOR...

Words by **Billy MacKenzie** Photos by **Sutty**

So I'm back on the other side of the planet where the water drains anti-clockwise and supercross whoops are steep and nasty! I've just got back from riding and spent most the day trying to get the whoops right. It's about five metres from a second gear corner to the beginning of the whoops and you have to try to get the 450 in fourth gear and set up straight before committing to them or it's just not worth it! I managed to get them right more than wrong so it was an encouraging day.

I've been pretty busy riding and training since my return, getting prepped for the up-and-coming supercross championships. I've already had two days testing with the team trying some new engine parts and getting the new 2012 Kawasaki set up. Straight away I felt comfortable and confident on the new bike and loved getting back into the supercross – I'm really looking forward to racing SX again.

So how was the Nations for everyone? I had the luxury of watching it from the comfort of a sofa for once. There was a little part of me that wished I could have been there but it was nice being a dignified observer and not feeling the heat from the pressure cooker that is the MXdN! It was far easier justifying not being picked to my

own ego than it was to fry my brain and bust my ass for something that ultimately isn't that important for me right now.

Too many times I've given it 100 per cent only to feel as though I've let the whole country down and after having had that weight on my shoulders this time around the choice whether to worry or not to worry was pretty easy! That's not to say I wouldn't have rode if I did get picked – of course, if my results had justified a position in the team I would have done the race and raced how I've always raced. All I'm saying is when you take a back seat for once and become a spectator it's easy to enjoy watching the race rather than racing and acting like your life depends on it! Maybe I'm just upset I didn't get picked? But I actually really enjoyed bench racing the motos and backing our boys all the way. We missed the podium by a fraction again but we all know we have the potential for more though and I'm sure we'll get it one day.

So after my trip home and getting back in the mix, the best choice for me is to race in Australia again. I loved racing the GP but a seventh place and a trip to hospital wasn't good enough to land me a well-supported GP ride again! There were a few offers but nothing to get excited about and after being on factory teams I know the

difference that makes. I felt I had the pace and I'm confident within myself that a full commitment to GPs again along with the correct support and training could see me near the front.

However, to race at the top level you need the whole package and if you don't then it's not worth the risk or the effort. You can see with the British boys who race the UK championships that there are a few of us who have the pace to race GPs but after working everything out it just doesn't make sense. To return to GPs I would have to start from the bottom and prove myself again. Kinda like how Pourcel has had to do – he got so much sh*t when he pulled out in Germany but look at him now. The boy is awesome and I hope he kills it next year.

It's just nice being able to make my own choices for once and my choice is to race in Australia again. The plan is still the same – I wanna try win this Aussie title and keep enjoying and progressing at SX. I'll come back and do the British GP again next year and hopefully put in a top five result and see if the offers improve. I'm confident in myself, I just need the teams to be too! But for that to happen I need to show them results – so we'll see how it goes in 2012!

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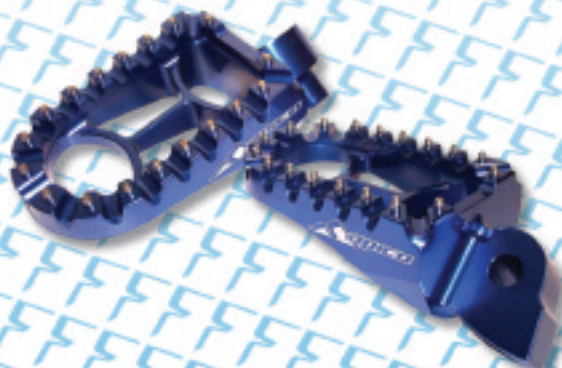
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